

“STREAM OF LIFE”

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PREFACE

All through the ages great thinkers in diverse lands had striven to learn the Ultimate Truth of Existence and had arrived at certain conclusions, all of which still hold sway over some section of mankind or other. This enquiry after the meaning and purpose of Existence, which will always continue, had given rise to various systems of thought which can be classified broadly into philosophy, religion and science. Every one of these three lines of enquiry leads to a particular aspect of the Ultimate Truth. We shall therefore briefly examine what they try to establish.

Sciences deal with the world palpable to the senses and probe into their structure, behaviour and so forth. The sum total of this knowledge can only be a partial one, since the whole of it is objective, in popular language. But life is both subjective and objective. The important point to consider is whether there will be any finality to this knowledge. The knowledge that we obtain about the world of objects is not concealed in the objects themselves just to be revealed by study and enquiry. This so called knowledge is just an expansion of the mind itself. This objective world can be subdivided into two broad classes namely (1) that evolved by Nature and (2) what has been evolved by man. To the former class belongs the entire universe and its contents including our own physical body. To the second class belongs all that has been contributed

by man from out of his own imagination. But all these products of man are fashioned out of the raw materials furnished by Nature and his own *imaginative faculty* did no more than combine and shape them in various ways. Man's contribution then arises from this imaginative activity. Is he entitled to call it entirely his own? No, not entirely, for even this imaginative faculty is a gradual development effected by Nature, commencing from the stage of inanimate matter and handed out as a gift to man at a particular stage of development.

Then again both the products of Nature as well as the products of Man's endeavours are the objective counterparts of the respective ideas. Thus what we call evolution is the interplay of Cosmic ideas and man's ideas. The objective world, continually being unfolded as a result of this interplay, is an unending process since there is no end to this imaginative faculty. So if the truth about this Existence is to be ascertained, exploring the universe and its contents is the last thing to be done. Sciences have grown in numbers and the accumulated knowledge of every one of them is so vast that it would take several life-times to obtain mastery over them and know the underlying truth. Sciences in any case throw no light on the problem of rational living with maximum of happiness, which is what every one is interested in and which is the end of phenomenal existence.

If we next turn to religion, we see that it is mainly concerned with morality and ethics, both of which are of significance only in one's relationship to other members of a community or society. Neither morality nor ethics can be considered to be applicable to one's own "self" or to be

of eternal value. Both are subject to continual changes with time, place and circumstances and have no relation to the Eternal Truth. Hence religion with all its dogmas does not satisfy the reflective and reasoning type of people. It does not explain life phenomenon nor its purpose.

Lastly we come to philosophy which is no doubt on firmer ground with its findings and has to a large extent explained the meaning and purpose of life. It has revealed the Ultimate truth but has not generally pointed out the way to live, while striving to attain Truth. It is to a large extent divorced from rational living and has become more or less an abstraction or just a view of life. Life has however to be lived through and all knowledge must serve that purpose and must be put to test in such living, since Truth is rooted in Existence.

We thus see that all these lines of approach of arriving at the Truth and fashioning one's life are imperfect, since each line of enquiry touches on only one aspect of life. But, unless all three aspects of life are harmoniously synthesised, we cannot arrive at a complete way of living. That is why we find that neither pure philosophers nor pure religious men nor pure scientists have a balanced view on all aspects of life, which alone can lead to the highest state of living.

According to the Hindu Concept of life, these arbitrary views of life phenomenon are not recognised or they are not stressed. A life full of knowledge or ignorance is all that is recognised. Views of life phenomenon are not of any moment. What matters is only the art of living. And so the Vedas, Upanishads, the Epics and the Puranas have all

only dealt with various ways of living and their consequences. Life and non-life are treated only as states of Existence.

Then all partial views of life arise from considering man solely as an individual or as a member of society or race. Indian Rishis and Scholars have generally stressed the former aspect and have pointed out the way to individual salvation. Western philosophers or thinkers ignore this aspect largely and consider man only as a member of the herd and attempt at, so to say, group salvation.

There is also the difference in the ultimate aim between the two sets of philosophers. Whereas the former seek to escape from this recurring cycle of births and deaths the latter stop short of leading a rational life, as they have not reached any conclusions about life after death. Hence, according to the Hindu concept, since all advancement is based on individual effort and this in turn depends on previous experiences, it is therefore not possible to devise methods or practices to advance a society or a nation and no law of averages can be worked out towards this end. Methods for group advancement can be applied only in respect of Physical conditions of living.

Western philosophers ignore the basic fact that the totality of man is the Mind and not the body. He is an entity in his own right first and then a member of the society to which he belongs. The latter inclusive of his own body can be referred to as his environment. So a rational way of living can be evolved only by keeping in mind both aspects of life.

These two aspects arise out of the mind-body combination. It is not generally recognised that the mind of each individual represents the experiences of a succession of lives and is a continuing entity, while the body, which is perishable and is not provided by oneself, is derived from the species to which he belongs. The body evolved by Nature is subject to various limitation incidental to the evolutionary process but the mind knows of no restrictions in its own nature. It is therefore not subject to the same laws, which fact is not properly appreciated and which therefore leads to much confused thinking. However, the mind is often subject to limitations by reason of its having to bear the burden of the body to have its purposes fulfilled. These limitations vary from man to man.

Now all enquiry, whether of science or religion or philosophy, is to ascertain the ultimate truth of Existence and the source of this mind-body combination and the purpose of its association. At the very outset of such an enquiry we can realise that there can be only two possible views. The first is that all that is around us, including our own selves, are beginningless and, while everything is rooted in changelessness all the time, they present varied forms and continual changes in terms of time-space phenomena, with which the body and sense organs are associated. The mind is not inherently bound to time-space phenomena but, by virtue of its association with the gross body, it also appears to be largely modified by it. The second view is that every thing took its origin at some point of time in the past and must end at some other point of time in the future, as there cannot be a beginning without an end, since it would offend reason.

If we adopt the first view there is no further discussion necessary since we are all then silent Witnesses of the mighty drama of evolutionary changes enacted by the Universal active principle. We are non-participants and are truly eternal Equanimity. So we need only discuss the second view which is what most people adopt.

The latter view can be expressed in other words namely that the continual changes that take place between the beginning and end must happen against a background of an unchanging state, since no changing thing can be aware of its own changes. Further a change has a meaning only with reference to no-change. So then, the origin and end of the series of changes is also an unchanging state. We cannot go into the logic of this view for there is none. We have to take it for granted if the second view is adopted. To proceed, all changes take place in the interval between the origin and final dissolution.

The next question is, what is it that is subject to this continual change? Obviously our mind and the environment. The mind is beset with a continually changing environment wrought by the Cosmic process which embraces the whole of creation, inanimate and animate. The Cosmic process undergoes continual change, by reason of the changes undergone by its constituents, but in imperceptible degrees. We are not now directly concerned with it. We are concerned only with our own minds interacting with the changing environment. And our minds must have two states namely a state of change and an unchanging state. This is a fact of moment to moment experience.

Hence all study and enquiry must be devoted to ascertaining the nature of the mind and the modifications undergone by it in its interplay with the environment. Such a study involves naturally (1) a knowledge of the so-called objective world which is the province of sciences, (2) a knowledge of the relationship between oneself and the other members of the species which is the province of the social, religious and moral sciences and lastly (3) the nature and functions of the mind which is the province of the mental sciences and philosophy. All these three aspects are different phases of mental activity. They cannot be dealt with apart from the mind. So all talks of "Objective study" or "Objective view" are meaningless as it is at no time possible to view anything by laying aside our mind.

We are thus brought to the crux of the problem of life namely the study of our own minds. The mind comes in contact with the external objects and these, transformed into ideas, give rise to percepts or knowledge of the external world. Such percepts are followed by varying reactions which constitute our emotional life aspect. Lastly both these sets of experiences constitute a store house for the play of the imaginative or creative activity. This completes our waking life. This is however a partial view of life since dream and sleep are equally important aspects of life. These three states may be considered thus:

1. Waking life represents the complete co-ordination of mind or "Self" with the senses and sense organs constituting the immediate environment.

2. The dream state is the complete co-ordination of the mind with the senses only but not with the sense organs ; and lastly.
3. Sleep is that state in which mind is dis-sociated from both the senses and sense organs and is in its natural or free state. Then we may also note that percepts and reactions arise in both waking and dream states, whereas imaginative activity goes on only in the state of sleep, as is explained later.

Therefore the study of the mind in all these modes of activity forms the subject of this book. Its nature, mode of operation, its contents, its various states and lastly the methods of its control and its final dissolution are all discussed in a simple and yet detailed manner. This enquiry inevitably leads to the first of the two possible views about Existence mentioned in the beginning. Hence the path of reaching that state has also to be indicated. In this, we have followed the path of "Gnana" or wisdom propounded by the sage Vasishtha in "Yoga Vasishtha" written by another well known sage Valmiki. This is known as the direct path, as distinguished from the other three paths namely (1) Yoga ; (2) Activity without an eye for results; and (3) devotion to God, which are all known as indirect paths. The true significance of these four different paths has not been properly presented anywhere to our knowledge nor has it been clearly understood by most people. The four paths are fundamentally different from one another in the methods followed and in the basis from which they proceed. Firstly the Yoga and Karma paths are both based on activity, the

former predominantly mental and the latter physical, both to the exclusion of reactions and imaginative activity to a large extent. Karma does not mean duty merely; it is something more. It is activity *i.e.*, mind or body interacting with the environment. In both these kinds of activity there is not much scope for emotional disturbances nor for much creative activity. Then Bhakti is a state of pure reaction as engendered by devotion to a supreme Being. There is very little of mental or physical activity or of imagination. It is primarily based on the reacting tendency of the mind as against the active tendency represented by the other two paths. Lastly the path of Gnana tackles the very foundation of all activity, namely imaginative activity, from which everything proceeds. It neutralises both activity and reaction in the shape of emotions through counter-imaginative activity and hence surpasses all other paths. Since creative activity is none other than imaginative activity its neutralisation brings about Repose out of highest enlightenment. This path of wisdom is considered the most difficult and so has been discarded by most people, although it is the easiest to practice since it imposes no kind of restrictions as to time, place or circumstances to practise it. It is really arm-chair philosophising but yet it is the most effective and pregnant with results in the shortest possible time.

Wisdom is the result of enquiry into personal experiences. Without a foundation of a rich and varied experience no enquiry can start, as there will be no material for it. The experience should naturally cover the entire range of life's

problems, in all its aspects and hence must necessarily extend over several life-cycles. The conclusions arrived at, as a result of enquiry with inadequate experiences, are bound to be wrong which we see exemplified in many writings both ancient and modern. Wisdom is the result of enquiry and it leads to the realisation of the ultimate Truth. Realisation however is not mere understanding of the Truth but actually living it in practical life. That is the true test of wisdom.

We have ventured to discuss about the birth of the universe and the story of evolution also incidentally. We are conscious that it may not find general acceptance as it runs counter to the existing theories on the subject. At the same time we cannot help thinking that it furnishes the soundest and most rational explanation of the phenomena. But no originality is claimed for the ideas on the subject given in this book. They are either expressed or largely suggested in the discourses to Rama by the sage Vasishtha mentioned already. This is all old wine in a new bottle, *i.e.*, ideas propounded at least 5000 years back presented in modern garb. All existing theories are based on the universe being finally reduced to atomic particles of matter and that ideas originated much later in the story of evolution. There are two fundamental objections to theories based on this supposition, apart from the fact that there is no explanation how matter itself came into being. The first objection is that insentient material particles or brute energy, whatever may be the ultimate form, cannot give rise to ideas, which are extremely subtle in nature and which belong to a different category. It is impossible to conceive of ideas originating from material

particles when sense organs, senses and mind had not been developed. The second point arising from the above is how, when these instruments of perception were not available, matter or energy could be said to have existed at all. They begin to have an existence only when mind phenomenon is in evidence and take on the varying patterns of the mind associated with them. According to our view, there is no matter or energy apart from the perceiving mind. They are only certain states of the mind and exist only as percepts. Everything in the universe exists only as an idea and it is impossible to prove that things exist in any other state, since everything has to be explained only in terms of mind which cannot vouch for non-mind. The relationship between mind and substances is similar to the atoms and the substance made of the atoms. The truth is that idea, energy and matter are the three different states of one and the same thing involving the principle of motion or change vibrating at widely different rates of frequency. This explanation of world phenomena is therefore on unassailable ground.

A word about the atom itself. The hydrogen atom was the first one formed and is the one which is most plentifully available in the universe. The longest period of time of the history of the universe was devoted to bring this atom into being. After imaginative activity had once succeeded in bringing a so called material particle into being, the rest of the evolutionary career was easy and took far less time for the whole course. It was a stupendous task to bring in something out of 'No-Thing'. It took millions of years of brooding thought to manifest itself as this

primary particle and so the energy liberated in breaking up this atom is really liberation of the binding energy of thought, which is akin to desire in the living species.

It is however not without a purpose that this enquiry into the nature of the material universe and the constitution of the atom was made in great detail in these discussions. In the first flush of creation, which we recognise today as the material world, the "Self" had got itself entangled beyond redemption. It was eternal slavery as we realise it even now. An escape from this state was provided when, in the course of the expansion of the imaginative faculty, life phenomenon appeared on the scene. But this proved to be a thralldom with a vengeance for, what came out of it was only slavery of the most varied types in the shape of thousands and thousands of different cell organisms, plants and animals up to the highest species of mammals. Nothing of large value was gained thereby, although they were all successive steps in liberation. Then came, as if by a miracle, another revolutionary change in the shape of man endowed with the faculty of posing himself as subject and object alternately whereas all creation that preceeded him were only objects to a subject beyond their comprehension. Of course most men too are in this category, but they all have a chance to be true men some day. This special faculty enables man, at some future day, to get rid of the role of being an object and assume his rightful place as a subject only. A single false step at the beginning of creation, in a thoughtless moment let us say, of assuming an independant role as "Self" brought about this universal catastrophe which has lasted several thousand million years and will

continue forever. What an unpardonable step? But there is this consoling fact that one individual after another will regain his original status in his own time. Further, if this false step has not been made, there would have been no chance to know ourselves. Knowing everything else is very easy but to know oneself is most difficult as this perpetual evolutionary drama illustrates. It takes millions of out-selves to know the "Self". All this points only to the expansion of the mind and the universe simultaneously and hence the justification for having treated about the mind phenomenon so elaborately in this book.

The power of reflection in man i.e., putting himself as a subject arises out of the slower activity of the mind in man in comparison to that among all the other creatures. The mind of man, as will be explained in the book itself, remains dissolved in Consciousness pretty frequently and functions therefore spasmodically. In all the other creatures the equivalent of mind is continuously active which accounts also for their more acute sense perceptions of one or the other of the five senses. The perceptions arise when the Cosmic activity or prana which enlivens every cell in the body rouses one or the other of the five senses. When this activity is quicker i.e., subtler or, in scientific terms, is of a higher frequency then the perception is also keener. In man this activity is slower and often the activity subsides completely. It is only when the mind is dissolved in Consciousness that reflection can arise as it is a state in which the mind plays the role of the subject. Animals do not have this capacity to any sensible extent and hence talk of Salvation for them is meaningless.

If we pursue this line of thought further we must inevitably come to the conclusion that, as we retrace the evolutionary course step by step, we will find that the intensity of activity is becoming greater and greater. Suspension of activity alone can give rise to reflection.

The activity of the earliest species of living organisms should be of a very intense kind and we will be reaching higher and higher frequency pulses. And when we cross over to the inanimate world the intensity of activity should take a further big leap. The inanimate world pursued tapas or yoga of activity in the intensest form. Putting the matter the other way, the activity observed in the material universe had to slow down considerably in the living species for the bodily organ to be built up gradually through the medium of the carriers of sensations, the nervous system.

Pushing the argument further we should expect increasing rates of oscillation or frequencies and speed of rotation of the electrons round their orbits as we proceed from the heaviest atom Uranium to the lightest hydrogen. This is of course a purely speculative idea which raises a problem to the scientists to verify the statement. We are however convinced that this must be correct, purely on intuition.

Let us finally ascertain what we really are *i.e.*, what we are constituted of. In the first place there is the body which races to destruction *from the moment of birth* and which was gifted to us incidentally by a couple as a result of their sporting instincts and whom we venerate consequently as

our parents. The various organs and orgaoisms of the body function without our aid by the laws established by Nature. But the body as a whole is takeo possession of by a Miod, which is a continually cbanging pattern of ideas, manifestiog itself in the body and making use of it for its purposes. The universal active priociple called Cbith is the basis on which mind phenomena is built up. Lastly we have the unchanging universal Witness without which no change and no evolutioo can take place. There is very little of our "Self" in all these three coostituents. It comprises only a continually changing set of experiences from birth to death. If we cling to this as our "Self" then there is no end to this perennial stream. But if we consider ourselves as the unchanging Witness then that acts as a powerful brake to the dynamic process of change and the stream dries up in a short time. It is for this purpose that the path of wisdom was preached by our ancient Seers but it can be made use of only by such aspirants as yearn for it. It is of no use for those who seek ooly wordly gifts and who have all their aspirations fulfilled in them.

S. V. GANAPATI

THE STREAM OF LIFE

CHAPTER I.

INTRODUCTION

What is life? Life is, briefly stated, an unending flow. It has neither a beginning nor an end and in any case not determinable by us. It is a continuous stream comprising the entire perceptible and perceivable universe. The flow which characterises this totality of universe is however entirely different from the flow which each individual constituent thereof experiences, just as a handful of water is different from the torrent of which it is a part or as the properties of the atom differ from those of the substance comprising these atoms. But they are to a large extent similar continuous flows all the same.

We then have a totality of flow and an individual flow. Naturally the totality of movement must be the sum total effect of all the individual movements at any and every instant and every individual movement is influenced at any instant by and constrained to follow the movement of the Resultant. The two movements are in any case continuous and the entire perceptible universe participates in it. There is no limitation as to space or time involved in this eternal movement. If the movement in any particular area or span

of time has to be considered, then we decide on an arbitrary extent of space and period of time and then survey the course of movement within that framework. In any case, the flux of world movement or individual movement, although taking place in the midst of the boundless space and within unending time, is not determined by them. These are in fact foreign to the movements.

It is thus possible to consider life from two different standpoints, viz., the larger life or universe as a whole or any of its typical units, so to say, of which it is composed. One such typical unit and the most highly evolved among them is the complex human being. The larger life represented by the universe as a whole is too vast and incomprehensible but a very good idea of it can be obtained by considering this typical unit and so we shall confine ourselves largely to it in the chapters that follow. In ancient Sanskrit literature, the totality of movement is designated as the universal mind or "Brahma" and the individual movement as "Manas" or mind simply.

CHAPTER II.

THE EVOLUTION OF THE UNIVERSE THE VEDIC COSMOGONY

Before we proceed further, we have to consider about the origin of this Universe in which the drama of life is played out. Otherwise this work would be incomplete.

There are various theories of cosmogony advanced by different religions of the world and by science, none of which seems satisfactory or complete. Most of them are crude and offend reason. The theory held out by modern science is also not a complete one.

The Vedas however offered the most rational explanation which can stand the test of modern science. But it was misinterpreted by later generations of commentators and scholars, on account of their own inadequate knowledge. Their distorted reading of the Vedic texts have been passed down the ages without question. We shall now give a fair rendering of the Vedic cosmogony and see how it compares with other theories.

The Vedas declare that the Universe is formed out of the five principal elements *viz.*, (1) Akasa ; (2) Vayu or Prana ; (3) Tejas ; (4) Water (Appu) ; (5) Earth (Prithvi). It is in ascertaining the significance of these various

expressions that commentators have erred. We shall set them out *here in a form in which everybody can properly appreciate their significance.*

A. "SATTWA" (AKASA)

In the Vedic literature Akasa is not to be understood to be mere expanse of void space or ether. It is one with Brahman. Brahman is Consciousness or pure Intelligence in repose and is the ultimate cause of the Universe. The Universe cannot spring out of an inert and unintelligent principle, nor can the intelligent and purposeful life-stream evolve out of a dead and inert Universe. What Brahman is to the subtle world akasa is to the gross world.

B "RAJAS" (VAYU OR PRANA)

This is the principle of motion resulting in change. Vayu is not to be interpreted as air ; it is the motion that is characteristic of air that is indicated, as substantiated by the use of the expression "Prana". Motion cannot be separated from air and this is therefore what was intended to be conveyed.

Motion, movement or change is what is characteristic of everything in the Universe, both animate and inanimate. There is nothing from the minutest participle to the mightiest solar system that is not subject to motion. Everything in the world is in ceaseless motion. Nothing is at rest, nothing without change.

This motion could have arisen, at commencement, only in the mass of Consciousness pervading and permeating the entire Universe. This dynamic aspect of Consciousness is what we call Intelligence, Mind stuff or Chith. It is this that subsequently evolved the material Universe.

C. (i) "TAMAS" (TEJAS)

The Principle of motion evolved tejas or the content of lightning *i.e.*, electricity, which is the basis for the evolution of matter. The entire Universe must, before the material world was evolved, originally have been in a state of electric charge. From this, matter in its original state, akin to the gaseous, was derived.

(ii) APPU

Fluid state of matter is conveyed by this. Water is no doubt the commonest and the most widely distributed liquid. It may be remembered that water in its vaporous state cannot be condensed to the liquid state without an electric discharge such as lightning.

(iii) PRITHVI

This signifies the solid state of matter with form and substance and is derived from the liquid state. The earth is the widest known solid.

This then is what the Vedas truly intended to convey and they are in agreement with modern science. The wrong

meanings usually given to Vayu as Air and Tejas as Fire have given a distorted picture of the evolution of the material Universe. Akasa is Brahman or Consciousness in repose and has in it, in a potential state, motion and all that is subsequently evolved in the form of the material universe. The principle of motion latent at first and manifested subsequently, evolves itself out in two directions, viz, (1) as subject in the form of Chith or Consciousness in a dynamic state and (2) as object in the form of matter in its three states. This is the fundamental basis for the evolution of the material universe simultaneous with the mass of Intelligence in a dynamic form. The three Gunas referred to as Sattwa, Rajas and Tamas, denote then these three conditions, viz., (1) Pure Intelligence, (2) Activity, and (3) Inertia or Matter.

The following table will illustrate the Vedic Conception of the evolution of the phenomenal universe in two parallel planes, the subtle and the gross :—

ABSOLUTE

<u>Subtle Plane</u>		<u>Gross Plane</u>
Potential existence unmanifested state	Akasa	The sky
Imaginative activity	Motion (Vayu)	Energy
Perception, illumination	Tejas	Electricity
Mind phenomena	Appu	Fluid state
Objectivity with name and form	Prithvi	Solid state

Although this table is self explanatory, it can be made clearer still by the following additional observations. What the sky is to the outer world, Consciousness is to the inner world, since both represent only pure states of existence in the respective planes. In this state of absolute repose, there arises activity in the shape of pure motion, which is necessarily followed by change. Such motion gives rise to the imaginative activity and ego-consciousness "I" in the subtle plane and material particle in the gross plane. Both take their rise simultaneously. Then from motion is evolved "Tejas" which gives rise to illumination on the subtle plane and the content of lightning or electricity in the material plane. They stand on an equal footing in their respective spheres giving birth to the objective world in their respective planes. From the one is born ideas in the shape of name and form and from the other matter. Fluidity is an intermediate state before things take a definite shape in the form of ideas or substances. As water takes any form according to the container, so also ideas take any shape before they are fully formed. This is the nature of the mind, being inclined to assume varying forms. There is no fixity about it.

Thus the subtle and the gross evolve simultaneously in parallel streams from one universal and all pervasive Being or pure Existence. This results in a world of ideas and a world of matter which together form the basis for the evolutionary process. The material forms must always have

their counterpart in the mental world or world of ideas. Ideas are only etherialised matter or matter is a physical representation of ideas

This can be further exemplified in the diverse parallel forms in which each, *i.e.*, ideas and the corresponding electricity, manifests itself in its respective spheres.

Ideas	{	flow of thought	current of electricity	} Electricity.
	{	zeal	heat	
	{	perception, sight	light	
	{	word (sound)	sound	
	{	reception in others	magnetism	

We can now consider certain common features observed in their behaviour :

1. Both are comprehended or recognised only when they manifest themselves in matter.
2. Both travel at unbelievably high speeds in their respective media.
3. The flow of thought influences the surroundings in the same manner as the flow of electricity is accompanied by the appearance of a magnetic field. And just as a magnetic field may give rise to a current of electricity, so also do environment promote the flow of ideas.

4. If the flow of current in a medium is interrupted, there follows a violent reaction in the shape of an arc; so also do suppressed ideas, born out of desires, give rise to violent reactions which make themselves felt at some future time.
5. Nature is a vast store house of ideas as well as electricity. Out of these ideas it has evolved the manifested world and out of electricity stored in the surrounding space, in matter and in plants and animals it produces all the phenomena in Nature and evolves the bodily forms to clothe the ideas.
6. Electricity can be produced artificially from the products of Nature, so also ideas are formed on the basis of ideas already evolved by Nature. Desire is another perennial source of ideas.
7. Ideas then pervade the non-material world in the same manner as electricity pervades the material world. They are similar in nature and manifestation, each sustained by the other in the evolutionary process.

What is more natural then, than for it to create fresh things in its contact with the three states of matter. In-animate matter then springs into life by the association of Mind stuff. Life is movement as contrasted with matter which is inert. Matter is required to provide the stuff in which the Mind-stuff can manifest itself. Hence the evolution of animated life.

Mind-stuff can interact with matter in its three states individually or in combination giving rise to corresponding creatures. It is natural then to presume that the land, sea or air animals might have been brought into existence simultaneously or at least independently. There is no basis for imagining that all existing species have sprung out of one common ancestry, except if it refers to the universal Chith.

CHAPTER III

SECTION I—EVOLUTION RETOLD.

Having considered the broad principles underlying the evolution of the universe as indicated by the Vedas, let us proceed to go into the question a little in detail. Nearly all theories start with life phenomenon and non-life is said to have emerged from a previous state of chaos. There is in this the unwarranted assumption that matter was there already, although in utter confusion. But we have to account for the birth of matter too. The Hindu scriptures alone have furnished the clue to it but its treatment of the evolutionary process is casual. Western science has however contributed a great deal of knowledge on the later evolutionary process without accounting for the origin. We have therefore to attempt a synthesis of the two systems of thought to have a comprehensive and detailed story of the evolutionary process. That is what we propose to do here.

MIND VERSUS MATTER

To understand how the evolutionary process started, we have to establish what there was before it. This will become possible only after ascertaining whether matter preceded Mind or more strictly Mind-essence, or Mind preceded matter. Mind is a later development arising out of imaginative activity and reacting tendency. In the initial

entities, cannot be explained in any rational manner except in terms of imaginative faculty, which is by no means derived from impulses or reactions. Both these phenomena, as will be shown hereafter, are derived from the imaginative faculty.

Matter was not self-created. The material formations, individual properties and so forth have also to be accounted for. All this did not happen haphazardly, for we notice planning and order in their formation. These must necessarily be attributed to something superior to matter and which existed prior to it. That is no doubt, Mind-essence.

Now firstly what is Mind? It is a series of states and each state represents either an object or an idea. Under idea we include also all such states as give rise to emotional reactions. Mind is thus not a constant or unvarying thing. It flits from one object or idea to another and is revealed to us only as such objects or ideas. Amidst such continual changes it is necessary to suppose that there must be something unchanging to note these changes, as the Mind cannot note its own changes unaided. Such an unvarying thing must be infinite in nature as the entire perceptual world comes into relation with it. This unvarying infinite thing

stages we can only speak of pure activity in the subtle plane which we shall for simplicity call 'mental essence'. In the Hindu philosophic literature it is called 'Chith'. All concepts have to be based on the solution to this problem, one way or the other. There are those that believe that matter existed first and Mind came after and there are others that hold the contrary view. But none can deny the fact that the existence of matter has to be testified to by the Mind. Matter is inert, unintelligent and has no existence in its own nature. Material substances do not cognise one another; they have all to be cognised by the Mind. The complex behaviour of living cells and organisms in the plant or animal life misleads us into believing that the cells have an Intelligence of their own, apart from that of the body as a whole. There really is no such separate cell intelligence. All intelligence is one and indivisible, as will be established beyond doubt later. Biologists are inclined to think only in terms of impulses and reactions and hence arrive at the immediate conclusion that mental phenomena are the result of physical activity. They forget the fundamental fact that reactions and adaptability arising out of it are functions of imagination. Mind is primarily imaginative faculty. All the various inventions of the world are due to the imaginative faculty. Great physical activity and strong reactions are noticeable only amongst the workers and lower orders of beings but no inventions are accounted for by them. The whole process of evolution, resulting in ever more complex

entities, cannot be explained in any rational manner except in terms of imaginative faculty, which is by no means derived from impulses or reactions. Both these phenomena, as will be shown hereafter, are derived from the imaginative faculty.

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But then, how can this unchanging Intelligence, without participating in the changes of the Mind (for if it did

change, it would no more be a Witness) be said to note all the changes? This would be untenable. So we arrive at the truth that mind itself assumes both the forms, at one instant as the Infinite Intelligence and at the next instant as the object. Subject and Object are one and the same thing in two different aspects at two different instants. This subject will be dealt with again in a later chapter.

This concept alone can give a rational and verifiable explanation of the phenomenal universe and its evolution. No other concept can give a valid explanation. This concept is a contribution of the ancient Hindu thought to the world. If it be explored and enlarged, every phenomenon in the world can be rationally explained.

BEFORE THE UNIVERSE CAME INTO EXISTENCE

Change and changelessness being the two aspects of the Mind phenomena, it is evident that the unchanging aspect must be the basic one. All change is rooted in a changeless substratum and becomes apparent only by reference to the unchanging state. So then this unchanging, all pervasive, infinite Being is the starting point of the evolutionary process. The entire universe without extent, beyond time, was a mass of pure Intelligence. There was no second thing, so that we can with propriety say that there was only a vast infinite, Intelligence but materially a Void.

'It is unimaginable that anything can be created out of this void, all intelligence though it be, as there is none to

create nor any substance out of which something can be created. To say then that the universe with all its contents was "Created" at some time is surely absurd. Then what is it that we see about us, sense and feel? What are we? All these will be made clear in the later chapters of this book but here it will be sufficient to point out that all that we see, feel or know, are in the shape of pure "Ideas" only. What we know about the things around us is not the things themselves but "Our Ideas" of the things. Our idea of a chair or a tree, or friend, or of the universe. These are what we really know. Nothing can be cognised except in the form of an idea. All objects and objective phenomena are only modes of the mind or mere percepts and hence unsubstantial, subtle, bereft of form and substance. The form and substance of objects are illusions arising out of the limitations of the sense organs. The Mind obtaining an idea of the external world is just like our getting an idea of our own figure through various mirrors, which give various distorted pictures of our selves. The sense organs do not really sense; it is the mind that senses but through the organs. Then how can it cognise except what is of the same category. Thus the entire universe and its contents are reduced to a series of ideas. Our entire experience consists of a succession of percepts or ideas. Just, as in Mathematics we cannot bring real and imaginary numbers in *true relationship*, although we deal with both of them in the same problem and arrive at certain results, so also is the relationship between the experiencing subject and the objects of experience.

Which one of the two is real? Obviously the experiencing subject or more correctly the subject aspect, which is changeless. So when we talk of creation of the universe, we are really considering the emergence of the idea of the universe, *i.e.* how the various ideas that we now have and our ancestors had, arose in succession or in other words we have to trace the evolution of ideas from the remotest past to the present time. These original ideas having flashed across the mental horizon countless millions of times have assumed for us a sort of form and shape which when viewed through the sense organs appear to us as concrete objects of the external world. The world of our experience is thus a temporary reality rising and setting with the mind. Let us then bear in mind that the story of evolution relates to the ideas of the world only and that in the beginning there were no ideas and that the universe was a vast void pervaded by Intelligence. And today with the same all pervading Intelligence, countless millions of ideas also float about in our minds finding their counterpart in external objects.

BEGINNINGS OF CREATIVE PROCESS.

In the vast and profound stillness, there arose an involuntary and gentle stir, like a ripple on the vast expanse of the sea. The vast and limitless mass of Consciousness behaves then as countless millions of units of Consciousness. The stir separates some of the units from the rest. When thus separated, what is more natural than for these units to be conscious of their independent existence. But this

state does not endure for long as the wave subsides and becomes one with the parent mass, an instant later. But a movement once started recurs again and again and the idea of a separate existence of the units gets gradually strengthened. When this process is repeated again and again, the state of independent existence is strengthened more and more and the memory of the parent source is gradually effaced until at some stage these units stand rooted in themselves alone. But they are still units of "Consciousness" really and truly, as they cannot get out of the vastness but the idea of separateness has become established. This idea is called "Ego" or "Self consciousness" which careers down as the evolutionary process.

Here we have the original forms of the individual "Self" and the supreme "Self". The former is the particularised aspect and the latter the universal aspect of the same Eternal Being. This unit of Consciousness is variously styled in the ancient Hindu literature as the Purusha, Isvara, the Lord and so forth. Now in explaining the origin of creative process, which is primarily a continual change, we have made an assumption, which may be said to be arbitrary, viz, that a stir arises in the universal Consciousness. Without such a movement in the mass of Consciousness, differentiation as subject and object cannot arise. If we talk of creation at all, we must make some assumption, without which creative process can never be explained and *the least of such assumptions is the one that we have made.*

It is justified by our own experience, as what we are most conscious of about the world around us is the change or continual movement. Such changes can only be derived from the initial stir that we have supposed.

SECTION II

THE BIRTH OF THE MATERIAL PARTICLE

Although the unit of Consciousness is now associated firmly with the idea of "Self", it still forms part of the wider Consciousness and is not different from it. It is the idea that it has given birth to that expands and generates the evolutionary process. Such an idea that emanates out of Consciousness must be endowed largely with the universality and potency of Consciousness itself and must necessarily be subtle (*i. e.* outside the range of the senses that are evolved later). What we call an idea here is the earliest imaginative process. Imagination is just a stir in Consciousness; it takes the form of a movement and in this infant state the movement is greatly restricted and is confined to a single direction. With gathering experience subsequently it is to become omnipresent. Motion or movement also takes its root here.

Bearing these facts in mind, we can proceed to follow the subsequent career of the idea of "Self". As the "Self" itself came into being by an externalising event, so also does the idea of "Self" inherit the tendency to externalise itself.

Such an externalisation can only be a counterpart or reflection of the idea itself and having emanated from the unit of Consciousness, it claims a state of existence dependent solely on the parent idea. Thus the reflection of the "Self" idea is, so to say, tethered to the "Self-Idea". So we have three primary things here, *viz.*: (1) the unit of Consciousness; (2) the idea of "Self" arising in the unit of Consciousness; and (3) the reflection of the idea of "Self" external to itself. It should be noted here that the unit of Consciousness suffers no change. The root idea "Self", that arose in it, is the one that generates the evolutionary process. We speak of a unit of Consciousness only for fixing our ideas, as this would enable us to have a clearer picture of subsequent developments. But truly speaking the unit of Consciousness suffers no more change than the wider Consciousness and hence is identical with the latter. But we associate each unit of existence with a unit of Consciousness.

In the Hindu religious literature, this "self" idea is spoken of as "Shiva" and the externalising tendency which brings about the evolution of the objective world is designated Parvathi, Shakthi, Kali, Bhairavi, Vishnu and so forth. Others call these two principles Purusha and Prakrithi. All that has been stated so far is based on the truth inculcated by the sage Vasishta in his discourses to Rama known as "Yoga-Vasishta".

The idea of "Self" and its external counterpart, which hold together, must be presumed to have given rise to our

present ideas of nucleus and satellite and to positive and negative. Both these sets of concepts can arise only with reference to an unchanging or a neutral being which is the Unit of Consciousness.

Now the idea that has arisen once repeats itself again and again, millions and millions of times, so that it is completely obsessed with it, so to say, and to the exclusion of any other extraneous idea. We may here refer to the statement frequently met with in the Puranas and Upanishads, namely that the universe emerged as a result of brooding thought. Each idea that rises spontaneously in the all-pervading Consciousness was brooded upon incessantly till the idea seemed to take form and substance. When such externalisation takes place then it gives rise to percepts and experiences, which strengthen the bond between the idea and the object. The idea, it is, that in course of time condenses itself, so to say, as an object and thereafter gives rise to the act of perception and a knowledge of the object. Thus we have now a degenerate unit comprising (1) a neutral unit of Consciousness; (2) an Idea "Self" arising in it and (3) the external counterpart of "Self-Idea" which altogether form a unit of what we now call a material substance. The strength of the idea derived from repeated functioning represents the energy locked up in the unit and the configuration itself the material unit. Hence we may rightly consider energy as derived from condensation of ideas and matter as derived from condensation of energy. More about this later.

We must notice one more feature of this forerunner of the material particle, viz., that the idea "Self" continually oscillates between the nuclear unit of Consciousness and the external counterpart, as otherwise the latter will cease to exist. It is as though this external counterpart is being kept alive by continual contact with Consciousness. Further, the satellite has to be active; it cannot keep at rest, for activity is the fundamental factor of creation and the only sort of activity which it can engage itself in at this stage is to keep spinning round the nucleus on which it depends for its existence. Thus while spinning round and round at a tremendous speed, it is kept continually charged, so to say, by the oscillations of the "Self" idea, thereby gradually strengthening the tendency to the semblance of an independent existence. In course of time then by countless repetitions of this process, a nuclear "Self" and an external counterpart come in to being, the two being in continual contact with each other by the to and fro movement, which is called Chith in Hindu literature. This pair in course of time emerges as a dependent-independent unit of existence.

Now we should clarify one point before we proceed further and that is, why it should be presumed that the satellite spins round the nucleus. It could be considered to remain stationary. There are two reasons for this presumption. In the first place the oscillatory "Self" obsessed with a single idea must find its counterpart all round itself, which is possible only if the gaze is turned in all directions and the

satellite spins round it in its field of influence. Secondly we actually see the planets spinning round the sun. The Solar system which appeared later must have patterned itself on some state of existence which existed prior to it. What else could have existed except the parent of the Solar system, which is the unit of what we now call matter.

This is the proper place to consider the dual aspect of the electrons of the atoms, which are the constituent parts of matter. Physicists say that this electron behaves both as a particle and as a wave of pure energy. This is easily explained in terms of the conception which we have outlined above. The electron, according to us, is alternately swinging between existence and non-existence and so behaves as a wave. It is alternately a particle and a wave.

Now we have examined everything about the forerunner of the material particle except the speed of revolution. We said that the satellite spun round the nucleus at a tremendous speed. With what justification, one may ask? We know about the speed of thought, which can in an instant jump to the remotest star, what takes light several hundreds of years to traverse. Now what we call "Thought" is a derivative of this Chith and the latter's activity can be no less than that of thought and if such rates of speed are imagined to be converted to a rotation at microscopic distances, we can justifiably say that the rate of spinning round and the rate of to and fro movement must be something unimaginable.

We have to explain one more thing. We spoke only of the idea of the material particle but not of the particle itself. The reason is that the particle has not yet taken its birth. It is still in the conception stage. Who is there at this stage to testify to its existence? How can form or substance exist at this stage of evolution. These attributes come into evidence only when sense organs come into being but they are non-existent now. So we say that the material particle existed only as an idea, which we call the forerunner of the particle itself.

EVOLUTION OF OTHER UNITS.

Imaginative faculty, when once set in motion, continues in its career of externalising itself further. There is nothing to stop the activity. Imagination begins to expand. With the experience of the first idea registered in the wider Consciousness, other units become the field for fresh ideas which successively bring into being two/three or more satellites. Now each set of ideas is established in its own nature and is all oblivious of other ideas, although all of them are objects of cognition to Consciousness. In this manner the forerunners of the 92 or more elementary substances, now known to us, were born one after another as ideas only out of the expanding activity of imagination.

Here we may note in passing that the periodic table of the elementary substances is marked off in groups terminating with an inert gas at the end of each period, followed by a period of fresh activity giving rise to new ideas or elements again ending with a new inert element. This process stops

at a stage when further packing of energy into the particle is no longer possible and the surplus energy is rejected in the form of radio activity, as happens in the case of the elements at the end of the periodic table. This also marks the next stage in the story of evolution.

ENERGY - WHAT IS IT ?

The extraordinary activity that has been going on, for we know not how long, as the percept of time itself was non-existent then, must necessarily have been attended by some results arising out of the activity itself. Imaginative activity, potent as it is by virtue of it being rooted in Consciousness, could not have rested without leaving its imprint in the surrounding space. It releases what we call "Energy" in its pristine form, which however remains in a potential state and goes on piling up, as it has no outlet to spend itself on. Hence all space gets gradually affected by this process. The energy exists as a sort of stress in space.

At this point one may ask how can imaginative activity release such energy which is of a brute (gross) nature. If we examine ourselves, first we would see how many desires arise in us, some of which continue unrealised and some obtain fulfilment sooner or later. What a flood of energy is released at such moments of fulfilment or disappointment ? It surges through the body and subjects it to extreme stress, sometimes with disastrous results too. It is ideas that rule men, a society or nations too. When an ambitious monarch was seized with the idea of conquest, what mighty forces were released through the combined efforts of millions of his

subjects? So ideas on the mental plane are manifested as energy in the material plane. When ideas get accentuated by repetitions, stresses are set up which pile up until a path of discharge is found in the shape of some activity. Thus energy is a bye-product of imaginative activity and it gives rise to physical activity subsequently.

PROPERTIES OF THE ELEMENTS.

We have learnt from science that all the known elements of the periodic table exhibit different but invariable properties. The explanation to this behaviour is very simple, if what we have said above is applied to the subject. Each idea is enabled to preserve its identity, so to say, by reason of its recurrent contact with the unit of Consciousness and but for it any element would behave in any way at random. At the same time we must remember that the elements *i. e.* the ideas did not take their birth endowed with the properties which we now associate with them. They just came into existence one after another; they are not cognisant of their own properties but we, through our various organs and Instruments, began to find these properties in them by reacting in particular ways. It would thus be equally true to say that the properties have been foisted on them by us so as to maintain that the elements are endowed with the said properties.

Summarising what has been said in the preceeding paragraphs, we have at this stage several ideas, fore-runners of the chemical elements, which we shall assume to be 92 in

number for the present, floating about in space. Each idea-group comprising myriads of units formed a large island in the boundless ocean of Consciousness permeated only by Consciousness, each island quite unaware of the others, all the same jostling one another perhaps. The intense activity of successive ideas in the process of condensation to stable elementary units left an imprint in the surrounding space as a stress which went on piling up. A particular stage in the evolutionary process of ideas was then reached and a temporary halt was called for something fresh to take place.

STRUCTURE OF THE MATERIAL PARTICLE.

Now a word about the nuclear structure. The central nucleus should be thought of as being identical in all the 92 elements and of the nature of neutrons. At each successive emergence of a new element, the neutron sub-divides itself into protons and a corresponding number of electrons, the remaining portion continuing as neutrons. Hence, it is the neutron that must be considered as the foundation of matter and material particles. When it sub-divides, it gives rise to the positive proton and negative electron, akin to the subject-object relationship in the subtle plane.

THE BIRTH OF THE UNIVERSE.

We must realise that the brute energy that is piling up as a result of imaginative activity cannot go on thus endlessly. Something had to happen to relieve the accumulating stress. Thus the stage was set for cataclysmic happenings. All the

materials of the inorganic world such as the air we breathe the waters of the ocean, the hills and mountains and the various other inorganic compounds which the earth contains, the Solar System, and the starry heavens were all there in an unmanifested and constituent state. At this stage we are reminded of an episode mentioned in the Hindu mythology which graphically describes how god Indra with his two weapons lightning and thunder smote down the flying mountains and rivers and compelled them to settle themselves on land. The significance of this fantasy is quite revealing.

This is exactly what must have happened when the fury of the pent up energy vented itself on the slumbering ideas. What took place then is indescribable. It heats imagination. Surely many things must have happened. The universe must have presented the spectacle of a mighty flameless furnace embroiling everything. The many islands made of the fore-runners of the elementary substances must have disappeared beyond recognition. Conditions must have been utterly chaotic. The elements must have combined with other elements, dissociated, recombined, tossed about and so forth. Many new things, in a potential form, must have emerged under the brutish force that was raging everywhere. Most of the inorganic compound substances that we now are aware of must already have established their affinities under the overmastering stress. Otherwise we cannot explain the affinities of the chemical elements. When the energy had spent itself to some extent, may be in the course of days or months or years, according to our present reckoning, the

universe must have begun to take shape somewhat on the general pattern as it is today, hereft of the plant and the animal kingdom. In that universal conflagration where energy was trying to get the upper hand, the greatest activity must have been in the interior regions while towards the outermost regions it should have been much less, with the result that these outermost spaces began to form the starry heavens subsequently. The interior coodensed to form the Solar system with the earth forming part of this system. These new ideas, which emerged by force of circumstances, continued to stabilise themselves to an orderly system in course of time, patterning themselves after the fore-runners of the units of matter.

Now an ohjection may be raised whether ideas can be welded together, as was stated above, by an unintelligent thing named eoergy. But it is a fact of experieoce. Success or failure in every attempt that we make in our lives goes on modifying our ideas. Above all commonsense should tell us that if ideas give rise to energy as a result of their activity, then this same energy must react on the ideas. The relationship must be mutually modifying in effect. Thus the earth and the sun and the moon and the starry heaveos emerged as grand universal and new ideas, hut they did not look as they do to us now. We now look at them only through a small aperture called eye aod say that the Sun is a large fiery ball haoging in the mid-heavens radiatiog light and heat all round. Our skio, which is another appeodage we have, tells us that the rays are warm. So the uoiverse preseots a different spectacle when seen through our sense

organs. Our mind is compelled, so to say, to view the things about us through these imperfect and distorting instruments handed down to us by the earlier species of creatures which forged for themselves such strange instruments in their struggle for existence. But if we could forget these instruments for a while and view the world about us directly with the mind, which is rather a difficult thing, we would have a strange and marvellously new experience, or more properly lack of it. If the mind discards the eyes it does not sense light or darkness or form and colour of objects and in fact the objects themselves vanish, because the mind is so subtle that it slips through the intervening space between the nucleus and the planetary electron of the atom. In this state of the mind, all objects of the universe including even the sun, moon, etc., remain only as ideas. Similarly by discarding the use of the other organs, sense of smell, hearing, taste, touch, all are lost. Everything will continue to remain only as unsubstantial ideas. If then, with such a mind *i. e.* bereft of the five sense organs, we looked at the universe we were speaking about in the preceding paragraphs, which emerged out of the chaos, it would have appeared to us more or less the same as it would today, except that today the universe is more densely packed with ideas than it was then, owing to the lapse of millions of years and fresh ideas having been continuously added down the ages.

To proceed with the universe that was formed, we must bear in mind that the fore-runners of the various elements that were caught in the vortex preserved their characteristics, whatever they were, as they could not be destroyed by the unintelligent energy. The new things

that were formed by association must necessarily have exhibited new characteristics. The larger systems of ideas like the Sun, Moon, etc., patterned themselves on their parents, *viz.*, the elements. These systems were held together in their positions by a mutually exerting force which we now recognise as gravitation. It cannot be different from the force which keeps together the nucleus and the planetary electrons of the atom. Thus it is *no new force* but only a corollary to the nuclear force and it gave the necessary stability to the systems that emerged. The new ideas began to persist thereafter and we need have no fear therefore that this set-up would at any future time suffer dislocation and plunge again into chaos. On the other hand, the ideas harden to ever stabler conditions. Slow changes are however bound to be happening all the time by the very reason of this hardening process. Thus the *universal law of gravitation* is one of the many important things that arose out of the mighty disturbance.

We have next to consider what was the nature of this original form of energy.

MORE ABOUT ENERGY

We stated already that energy had two forms, namely, the static and the dynamic, the latter having been instrumental in bringing about new forms of ideas. This energy, being derived from the activity of ideas, must also partake of the nature of the ideas in its behaviour, namely, to be oscillatory in character following the to and fro movement. It is this form of energy that we recognise

today as electricity. It flows with a speed akin to that of thought. It is oscillatory in nature as is recognised in the flow of alternating current, which is the fundamental form of electric current. Direct current is a modification of it obtained by manipulation. Then the flow of current is accompanied by circular magnetic lines of force. This is derived from the orbital motion of the reflected idea which was stated to be spinning round the central idea "Self" which is to become the nucleus later on. When there is no flow of current and it is impeded, it remains as a stress, which we call potential difference. Finally electricity is also indivisible in form, same as ideas. Both of them manifest themselves in various ways through matter, later in the evolutionary process. Electricity therefore patterns itself mostly on the characteristics of ideas or thought and is the parent form of energy in the universe.

All other forms of energy such as light, heat and sound are derived from it and are its variants manifested in different media. The sense of touch recognises electricity as an invisible flow, the eyes recognise it as light and the body as heat, the ears as sound. Thus material forms interpret the same energy in different ways, in the same manner as they do ideas, about which more will be said later. The limitation of various material forms confers the character of manifoldness on the one form of energy.

OTHER FORMS OF ENERGY

We also speak of alpha, Beta, Gamma rays as well as X-Rays. What are these? These must also be derived from the same source except that each of these forms is

recognised under different conditions. The conditions themselves impose upon the energy differences in its behaviour. Just as the same mental movement gives rise to various emotions according to the preconceived notions of persons, so is the nature of the behaviour of energy also. The energy manifested by the various set-up of ideas differs in the mode of manifestation. In fact every element and every combination of these elements that occurs in nature, whether in the earth or the solar system or in the stars, must be continually giving out energy in the form of radiation which arises out of the hardening of the ideas which may be construed as the attainment of stability of the substance. These are the very fountain heads of energy in the universe. We cannot otherwise account for the inexhaustible energy in the universe. Quite a good deal is locked up in the material substances which derived the energy from the surrounding space and still there is an unimaginable amount of energy. Every one of these radiations must be different from one another and among these, Scientists have identified a few of them, such as the ones we mentioned above, besides ultra-violet, light radiations, heat etc. Unknown radiations are many more. Science in its further quests may unravel some of these in the near or distant future. We may consider ourselves then as being immersed in an atmosphere full of innumerable radiations, some of which react beneficially on the bodies of trees and animals and others are harmful. Under certain states of bodily health we may respond to such radiations which shows itself as an infection in the body. Epidemics among plants or animals of varying types can be explained

only in this manner. They are merely the reactions of the minute organisms in the body under certain states of bodily health to the radiations in space. Then there are other radiations besides, to which we are immune or insensitive now.

MATTER

Having dealt with energy, we shall next proceed to consider matter which is only another form of energy. They represent stored energy. They must have consumed a lot of energy from space in condensing to the forms they have assumed, for the disintegration of matter releases enormous amounts of energy. Matter is known to us to appear in three different forms, namely as gas, liquid and solid. Gases and liquids are characterised by having no form or shape of their own and by the property of flow. The gaseous state has the property of diffusion on account of the lack of cohesion among its particles, whereas particles of liquids crowd together by virtue of cohesion. By abstracting energy in the form of heat from gases or by adding similar energy to the liquid state, one state is transformed into the other. It is therefore clear that the gaseous, liquid and solid states of matter, all of them comprising of the elementary substances or compounds formed out of them, denote only different grades of condensation of the energy of space. Whence arise the different degrees of the so called cohesion between the elementary substances to group themselves into one of the three states? How were the solid substances, the rocks and,

the hills and mountains formed? It must have required enormous pressures to make these things out of the elementary substances. In that vast and limitless expanse of space permeated only by the atomic elements, how could great pressures be imagined to weld the atoms together, as it were. There was nothing to create such pressures. Hence the three states of matter can only represent, as stated above, different degrees of abstraction of energy from surrounding space by virtue of which they are grouped together in various degrees of proximity. By restoring the energy they resolve themselves into their original state. The elementary substances exist, separated from one another, in various degrees of proximity which our sense of vision is unable to perceive. It forms different impressions of the liquid and solid state of substances by virtue of its own inherent limitations. It is unable mostly to perceive the gaseous state directly and has to resort to other means to know about it.

With this we may stop consideration of the inanimate world as we have sufficient data for consideration of the further evolutionary process. It also serves no purpose to probe deeper into the constitution and properties of the inanimate world, so far as the philosophic standpoint is concerned, although it would be worthwhile from the scientific viewpoint. The two viewpoints differ only in their final assessment of values. The scientist is content to look at the world and analyse it upto the limit of his senses, or with extensions of these senses; whereas the philosopher goes beyond and tries to see it directly with the mind's eye.

SECTION III

LIFE PHENOMENON — ?

PRELUDE TO LIFE

Inanimate nature with the solar system and the starry heavens marks one stage in the story of creation. It is the result of the expansion of the "Self" idea. This "Self" in trying to see itself imagined, one after another, many "Not selves" and so brought into being many fresh ideas, none of which, however, has any claims to existence in its own nature. Their existence is bound up with or dependant on the "Self" idea. Without such a "Self" there cannot be a "Non-self". Hence these "Non-selves" which we call inanimate nature have taken fixed and unalterable characteristics following the original ideas, which neither we nor they by themselves can change. But it must be remembered that there was no design or intent behind their properties. They were pure spontaneous phenomena, a sportive display of the "Self" idea.

The next stage in the evolution is the attempt of the "Self" idea to escape from the eternal thralldom in which some of its kin caught themselves. The variant from the unceasing slumbering Consciousness displays itself as life phenomenon.

WHAT IS LIFE?

What is life phenomenon? In common language it is the association of the subtle and the gross principles (mind and matter). It is not thereby to be inferred that

in inanimate objects there is not this combination. In them too the same association exists as previously pointed out but in perpetual activity of the same and unvarying kind. Whereas in living bodies, the subtle principle is in perpetual multiform activity. There is thus a further large expansion of the imaginative activity of the "Self" idea. For the purpose of this activity, it makes use of the so called objects of the inanimate world. This is the essence of the life phenomenon.

EARLIEST FORMS OF LIFE

The earliest forms entitled to be called living beings are those which we call "Single cell structures" *i.e.*, those minute organisms which are visible only through microscopes. They are to the plant and animal worlds what the atom is to the inorganic world. Just as the atom is the foundation of the material universe, so is the minute cell organism the foundation of the plant and animal kingdoms. Every species of plant and animal life has emerged out of this elementary form of life phenomenon.

Between the earliest form of living entities and the *inanimate matter* there must be *naturally intermediate* forms, such as viruses, which partake of the nature of both but which cannot be definitely grouped either with the one or the other. It is needless for our purposes to elaborate on this:

COMBINATION OF SUBTLE AND GROSS

The single celled living form is a combination of the subtle and gross principles, the subtle principle being the "Self" idea and the gross principle being the so called material particles which now fill up all space. So then fresh ideas of "Self" participating in the creative or evolutionary process find material for their manifestation in these material units. The subtle principle then spends its activity in the gross, comes to rest as it were by identifying itself with the particles thereby forgetting its own true nature. This identification of imaginative idea with the material object in which the idea loses itself is called enjoyment and when the idea unlocks itself from it we call it release. This sense of enjoyment results in welding the subtle and gross principles to an unified existence. This brings about the formation of cell bodies, formed out of the elements of the inanimate world. Such bodies must have evolved gradually and step by step. In the course of such development the contact or fusion of the two principles must have been of gradually increasing duration. The first contact is, say a fleeting fraction of a second, then in course of time such associations may endure for say minutes by which period a transmitting medium would have been well established. When the two principles dissociate themselves permanently we call it death and when this takes place the dead matter is left as a residue in the earth or water or air, thereby contributing new substances in place of those taken for constructing the body.

Let us for simplicity call this unified existence of the two principles the unitary cell which consists of a sort of mucous body in contact with the surroundings and a nucleus which is the actual abode of the vital principle.

The nature of the vital principle is, as we have already said, alternately to move out of Consciousness and then back to it at a high rate. When it returns it is one with Consciousness and when it moves out it is one with the body. The body is, as it were, kept charged unceasingly from Consciousness and the reactions arising out of the Contact of the body with the environment is conveyed to Consciousness by the to and fro impulses. It is this phenomenon that enables the otherwise dead matter to respond to the vital principle. The body that is by now become a tool of the vital principle begins to transmit changes in its surroundings to the vital principle, which gradually develops a tendency to react which brings about structural changes in the body. But this is not effected in one generation of the organisms but after many attempts by several generations of them. Therefore the process of adjustment to changes in the external surroundings and the resulting structural alteration of the body to withstand the changes proceeds step by step and after innumerable sacrifices of many generations of organisms. Thus emerge the cell organisms with certain well defined functions. Here we must consider the constituent parts of the cell organism and the functions of each one of them. First there is the cell body, which is in contact with the environment and susceptible to the changes in the latter.

Such reactions arising out of environmental changes are transmitted by special nerve-like fibres to the nucleus, which is akin to the brain and which is the seat of all reactions and impulses arising therefrom. Thirdly the nucleus itself is a sort of reversible agent transforming ideas in the subtle plane into impulses in the physical body and impulses in the reverse direction as sensations in the subtle plane. Lastly the nucleus is also the seat of Consciousness. The physical body includes the digestive and excretory apparatus also. This then is the constitution of the cell organism.

We have now to consider a very important question, *viz.*, where the successive experiences of the organisms are registered and how they are transmitted, whether without change or with changes designed for greater adaptability, to succeeding generations. Here we have to keep in mind the three principals or agents participating in the phenomenon, *viz.*, the all embracing Consciousness which for convenience may be imagined as countless units, (2) the material body which includes the nervous system and the nucleus formed out of the inorganic world and lastly (3) the subtle movement arising between the two and which is instrumental in enacting this drama of life. Inanimate matter cannot function as it is devoid of volition; it can just lend itself to be used by some purposeful being. Then at the other end, Consciousness is equally non-participating and unchanging, as only then it can give rise to changes. So it is that which oscillates between the two which manifests itself as the life phenomenon and acts as a carrier both for those impulses which are peculiar to particular organisms as well

as for those which blossom into a new species, based on the experiences of the earlier species. While say a particular species is kept alive with its own well developed characteristics by the unchanging carrier impulse, if surroundings change, calling for readjustment on the part of the organism, the carrier which conveys such information to Consciousness returns with a message or a new impulse for necessary modifications in the structure to adapt itself to the change. If the structure is unsuited to the necessary modifications, the new impulse is transmitted to a fresh generation which are born endowed with the new faculties adapted to the change. It may also happen that the adaptability has to pass through several generations before it is firmly established in the new species. But in every case new ideas to counteract the changes in external circumstances are always registered in Consciousness, since otherwise the new ideas cannot be transmitted to the succeeding generation. Thus we see that in what we call living organisms, there are, so to say, a dual function of the subtle principle *viz.*, the primary one which mediates between Consciousness and the material body and sustains the latter and a secondary one comprising of new ideas to which the primary one acts as a carrier. It is these new ideas, which no doubt spring from the creatures themselves, that introduce changes from species to species. In the entire range of evolutionary process it may be recognised that changing external circumstances were dominant in calling for newer and newer species until the human species emerged, which began to master the external conditions to a large extent. But what we must particularly note is the fact that every species of organism is an organic idea group functioning

through a material body in some definite manner. External physical conditions calling for organic changes in the constitution of the organism bring about more and more complex organisms after a series of failures or several generations of intermediate forms and every such complex organism retains the characteristics or functions of the earlier organism along with those that were acquired anew. Thus the primary impulse that is instrumental in preserving the characteristics of every species acts at the same time as a carrier for developing a new species.

NATURE OF THE ACTIVITY OF ORGANISMS

We shall now proceed to consider the nature of the activity of these earliest forms of living matter. We saw that in the world of inorganic substances, the nature of the activity was an extreme form of self centred existence from which there was no redemption. And there was a break from this thralldom in the shape of living matter. We call this deliberately "Living Matter" as they are only the forerunners of living organisms which came later and which were distinguished by their peculiar and somewhat more complete organic activity.

Activity is the characteristic of all phenomena whether in the material universe or in the world of life and so "Living Matter" has to pursue activity in a form different from that which is common in the inorganic world. The only sort of activity that it can engage itself in is to break up the material substances or combine simpler substances into more complex ones. Their forms being of the magnitude of the atoms themselves, they can penetrate in the

inter-spaces of molecules and break them up into simpler ones or combine various simple elements into compounds or complex substances. Such a sort of activity must have gone on for a long long time on a wide and intense scale. We cannot account for various combinations of substances of the inorganic world found on this planet except on some such hypothesis. Many of the compound substances require large concentrations of material energy and special technics to break them up into simpler elements of which they are composed. We cannot imagine any special laboratory type of technics to have brought about these compound substances. Such energy must undoubtedly have been derived partly at least by the slow process mentioned above, over a considerable period of time.

Such activity then brings about not only new compound substances and dissociation of compound substances into simpler ones but also a new form evolved out of these inorganic material which subsequently developed into organic matter. Thus all organic matter is what has been evolved by the subtle principle *Chith* from inorganic substances.

GROWTH

All organisms, which constitute the foundation for the organisations such as plants and animals to come later, in the same manner as atoms constitute the foundation for material substances, are characterised by the two fundamental features, *viz.*, assimilation and multiplication. In the early stages of this step in evolution, these two functions are combined into one and can be denoted as pure activity only, both assimilation and multiplication occurring more or

less at exceedingly short intervals. Gradually the functions become differentiated as the period of association of the subtle and gross principles becomes lengthened. Integration and disintegration which succeed one another evolve themselves as the tow-fold activity of a period of existence followed by multiplication. This prolongation of the period of associated existence brings into evidence also the phenomena of birth and death.

Just as simple elements in the inorganic world have given rise to complex compounds, so also must complex organisations such as the plants, have gradually been evolved from these simple organisms, which are now characterised by (1) a short period of associated existence, (2) multiplication and (3) phenomena of birth and death.

Here we may as well consider how this phenomenon of growth had been brought about in the evolutionary process. It is quite apparent that growth is a variant of motion. In the inorganic world we saw that this motion took the form of spinning round in orbits and as we go up the ascending scale of the periodic elements, the orbits go on extending from the central nucleus. Extension or elaboration here takes place in jumps. When we now turn our attention to the organisms, the medium that intervenes between the subtle and the gross can respond to this tendency for motion only by extension or growth, and the motion must necessarily be continuous. In the organic world this motion takes the form of growth or change of form. Such a growth lays the foundation for conductors of sensations between the nucleus and the gross body which

envelopes it. It is by reason of this fact that food is required, namely, to maintain the energy of motion in the form of growth. Growth is a physical function and needs therefore physical energy for its sustenance. But as we have already stated earlier the impulses for this growth in the form of "motion in constraint" emanates from the subtle principle, of which the nucleus is a physical manifestation. The nucleus is the means by which the transformation of gross into subtle and subtle into gross phenomena takes place. We thus see that growth is the manifestation of the universal principle of motion or change arising out of the unceasing activity of the "Self" idea. This successively gave rise to the sense of duality which is evolved into ideas, to elements of the inorganic world and thereafter to the physical body for the living principle.

CESSATION OF ACTIVITY

Such living matter, as has been spoken of must necessarily have short durations of life or associated existence. By a gradual process of evolution this association strengthens, so as to continue over longer and longer periods but in newer and newer forms of life. But in every case the process of life must terminate for it is not in the nature of the subtle principle to be bound for ever and so it frees itself as it had freed itself from eternal bondage in the shape of inanimate matter, only to be caught again in the vortex, as this has become its second nature. But now it requires the same type of body to which it

has been used and so fresh bodies have to be provided when it seeks re-entrance. The technique that was developed for this purpose was to grow and split itself. But this process could go on only for some time and then had to terminate, for otherwise the entire universe would have been filled up by them, but we know for a fact that this did not happen. Only a very small part of the units of Consciousness was associated with such activity and the extent to which the species multiplied itself was also limited, so as just to preserve that particular species.

At some stage imaginative activity breaks new ground and either under force of external circumstances or by its own innate restlessness introduces modifications and elaborations of the species.

PRESERVATION OF THE SPECIES AND NEW SPECIES

The next question that we have to consider is what happens after the death of a creature and how the particular species to which it belongs is preserved. With death, all the experiences of the creature would be lost to the species if such experiences were not thought to be registered otherwise also. For, these experiences are undergone by the individual organisms of a particular species and not by the totality of the organisms and hence cannot be transmitted through the body. And then consider how new species equipped with more and more efficient means of existence based on the experiences of earlier species had been coming into being. The earlier species is not

transformed into the new one for they both exist simultaneously. But the new species has not only arisen out of the experiences of the immediately preceding species but must also have come out of its womb, for such bodily organisations could be developed only in the womb. So the urge to generate a new species arising from the ineffectual struggles of the previous species must be considered as being registered in the wider Consciousness. The new impulse readily takes up its abode in the body coming from the womb of the prior species but by its imprint subjects it to a changed mode of life and makes of it a new species. This is the process by which successive species of creatures had come into existence one after another and which after having carried on a long period of existence had given rise to fresh ones.

Thus both the phenomena of preservation of the species and generation of new species must lead us to the conclusion that all experiences of every living entity must not only be registered in the brains of the creatures but also in the wider Consciousness. And here we must note a difference with respect to the new species, *viz.*, that in the wider Consciousness two sets of forces are operating, *viz.*, (1) the original species giving rise to creatures of the same species and (2) the new tendency to create a fresh species waiting for a body from the womb of the original species. The transformation must take place as a consequence of the interaction of these two sets of forces, *viz.*, the yearnings for a change of

the original species modifying gradually the physical make up of the embryo in its womb and the changed impulse in the wider Consciousness which takes possession of the newly born when it comes out of the womb. These two forces bring out a new species in a few generations. Thus every new species comes out of the body of the earlier species only. The unstable intermediate forms seem to have disappeared altogether leaving many gaps in the evolutionary process. This is similar to what took place earlier in the evolutionary course in the mineral kingdom, where the isotopes of the various elements either disappeared or left little traces behind. These isotopes are the unstable intermediate stages leading to the emergence of the stable elements of the well-known periodic table.

Thus it is clear that all experiences of every entity must be registered in the wider Consciousness. It is this fact that enables the dead ones to take recurring births with all the experiences that they had previously gained. There is no other means by which the experiences of the dead could be transmitted to the species. No experience is thus lost to the species. If death meant complete annihilation there can be no progress in any species at all nor can there be any evolution. What takes place is this namely that the idea of each individual of the species to adapt itself is registered in the wider Consciousness. Successive generations of the species go on with the struggle accentuating the urge for a change.

These repeated ideas of the same pattern weld together to form a mighty overpowering urge and at some favourable period in the life history of the species react on the most responsive members of the species and bring about the desired change in successive stages.

Having considered how each species preserves itself and how fresh species are brought into being, we may now proceed to examine the different schools of thought in modern biology.

SECTION IV

MODERN BIOLOGICAL CONCEPTIONS EXAMINED

One important school of modern biologists holds (1) that the evolutionary process has no purpose; (2) that the process is marked partly by randomness and partly by orientation and (3) lastly that the orienting factor is the adaptive tendency to environmental factors and that the random feature is due to the frequent and spontaneous mutation of the genes of the organisms.

The other important schools of thought are known as "Vitalists" and "Finalists". The former holds that there is a vital principle "Elan Vital" underlying the entire range of evolutionary process. The other school subscribes to the idea that evolution proceeds with a purpose towards a final goal. Other views are comprised of various combinations of these diverse schools of thought. It is proposed to examine these three main views here.

Let us consider the random and orienting features of the evolutionary process. What is understood by this is that specific species evolve in a particular direction as if in obedience to an Orienting factor and then at a particular stage the succeeding species, although originating from a common ancestry, show signs of random transformation. Naturally the orienting factor is at this stage suppressed. These are no doubt observed facts but biologists do not offer any satisfactory explanations for these phenomena.

Now every species is an organisation of a group of organisms, each one of the latter having a different function unknown to the others. Such a group of independent organisms must be and is in fact under the superintendence and control of one co-ordinating factor, whatever scale of life we consider. If it were not so, no evolutionary change can take place in response to environmental changes, since the changing organs of the species are not directly affected by environment and hence do not undergo modifications directly. For instance, if an animal has to change its food habits and if its teeth are not adapted to the new food and if its stomach cannot digest it, then it is not the teeth or the stomach that are aware of the troubles but some other co-ordinating or controlling factor equivalent to the mind of the human species. The change in the organs has to be brought about by this presiding factor. No change, no evolutionary process can take place or can be explained except in terms of this controlling factor. It

is the ignoring of this factor that has given rise to many misconceptions in biology.

It is obvious that every step in evolution marked by a modification of an existing species or by the emergence of a new species represents a revised system of ideas. The external form of the animal, plant or even a material substance is simply a solidified representation of the idea designed for the operation or impact of that idea on the environment. It is an admitted fact that changing environment brings about slow changes in the organisation of the organisms of the species. Now all such external changes are first transformed into impulses in the body of the species as has been already explained, which are again transformed into ideas calling for a reaction. It is the reactions then that bring about structural changes in the organisms.

An environmental change may call for a structural change in the organism or a modified way of life but what changes in internal structure and what modifications in the living methods would meet the external change are all tackled and solved on the mental plane, calling for the exercise of imagination, arriving at a decision and inducing the requisite changes in the bodily structure. If imaginative process were ruled out, structural changes should have taken place, at each step, by a long process of trial and error to meet each new situation. For instance if an animal had had to modify its tooth organ because of a new kind of food, this change should have been arrived at after

trying many other organs of the system. Such blind changes are not evidenced in the evolutionary process. On the other hand one witnesses the constant exercise of imaginative faculty in bringing about changes in structural organisation and new ways of life to meet Environmental changes. Briefly then all biological changes must be considered as evidences of the expansion of the imaginative process. The bodily organ is just a physical pattern or representation of an idea group. This idea group, each one of which represents a particular species, is what we should call a "presiding factor" which controls the behaviour of that species and which subsequently brings about changes also.

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It should be noted that environmental change has not been the sole factor in continuing the evolutionary process. This idea is largely admitted by the biologists too. The only other factor then that can be considered to have participated is what we may call "internal trends" in the exercise of imaginative faculty. It is this which fashions the available organs to lead a more efficient way of life suited to the environment. Thus both external and internal influences have been instrumental in inducing continual changes in the evolutionary process. The external changes call for the exercise of the imaginative faculty and its expansion.

We are now in a position to explain both the random and oriented features of evolution in terms of imaginative

faculty. They are but two aspects of one and the same faculty. In the exercise of one aspect it expands itself into a new species by virtue of the tendency to adapt itself to changing environment or a call for a new way of life. In the exercise of the other aspect it exhibits Orientation. Randomness in the evolutionary process is a multiple solution presented by the expanding imagination to solve a given problem or situation and developing into diverse species from a common stock. Such a thing is possible only by an imaginative process which at each step contributed new ideas to the solution of the problems on hand. There is a spurt in the imaginative activity when multiple solutions are offered.

Evolution is mainly a process of interaction (1) between ideas and environment, through the intermediary of organisms which are the vehicles of the external influences and consequent reactions and (2) the interaction between the resulting reactions and new ideas resulting therefrom. It may be well to remember that environment represents only earlier ideas crystallised into form and substance. Thus the interaction resolves itself into one between the old and new ideas through their concrete counterparts. In such an interaction naturally modification arises in that which is less powerful. The human species is largely endowed with the capacity to modify the environment, but in all the lower orders of beings environment plays the more important role and modifies the species.

It will now be clear that the evolutionary process is a gradual expansion of imagination in the shape of ideas and that the external physical form is only a vehicle for the interaction of old and new ideas gradually undergoing various modifications. To explain evolution in any other manner would involve making a series of unwarranted assumptions. For instance consider the random mutation. If it is taken to be an explanation for the evolutionary process, which introduces suddenly at various stages several diverging species from a common ancestry, it conveys nothing. If, on the other hand, it indicates only an observed fact and not meant to be an explanation, then nothing is gained thereby, as we have to know the cause of the recurrent phenomena. It was however seen that, in terms of imagination or creative activity, the explanation is very simple. Evolution in short is an expanding imaginative process, commencing with the material universe and then successively generating therefrom organisations of living organisms in the shape of stationary and mobile forms, *i.e.*, plants, insects, fishes, amphibious creatures, reptiles, mammals, culminating in the human species.

We can now find a reconciliation between all the three important schools of thought mentioned at the beginning, *viz.*, (1) adaptive orientation combined with genetic Mutation; (2) Vitalism and (3) Fioalism. In fact each school presents only a phase of evolution and though they are all incomplete, they are all of them partially right. The expanding imagination is the driving force behind creative evolution and without it there can be no talk of creation or evolution. This evolution proceeds, as already stated, both

oriented and with an appearance of randomness. But then, is there no end to this process? Is it possible to imagine that a process assumed to have had a beginning can continue for ever? It is against all commonsense and reason. A beginning presupposes an end too.

What then is the ultimate end of this all?

The expanding imagination culminated in man, who has acquired the faculty of reflection and introspection. This comes into full play when worldly experience ripens into wisdom, after all desires are shed one after another. The incessantly active mind becomes more and more quiescent and the imaginative process shrinks till there are no more desires and no exercise of imagination. The driving force that sustains creative activity ehhs out completely and there will be no further activity from this unit. So then the Finalists too are right in that evolution proceeds towards a final goal.

What came out of Nothing goes back to Nothing.

CHAPTER IV

MIND AND KNOWLEDGE

Having ascertained how this universe came into existence and how we were ushered into this world at the end of a long drawn-out process of expanding imaginative activity, we can now proceed to consider the highly evolved individual unit, namely the human mind. The nature of the mind and its multifarious manifestations will be dealt with in the succeeding chapters. So we shall here enquire into its prime function of acquiring knowledge. Knowledge is at the very root of all ways of living, be it derived from instinct as in all animals and plants or acquired as in the case of man.

Mind is the instrument for acquiring knowledge and it is at the same time its storehouse. The knowledge acquired by the mind is of two kinds namely subjective and objective. The latter kind of knowledge deals with the world of perceptions *i.e.*, the multifarious aspects of the world as interpreted by the five senses. Our existence is bound up with such knowledge and so the greater the knowledge acquired the more efficiently can the life be planned out. On the other hand subjective knowledge is to perceive the unity in diversity as explained in later chapters. The object of such knowledge is to secure emancipation from the enslaving effects of knowledge. In the ultimate analysis knowledge is the prime ignorance

that precipitated this creative activity and evolution, for it is in the quest to perceive and to know that the "Self" idea got entangled as we saw in the last chapter.

Now, the means of acquiring one kind of knowledge or another is different. Objective knowledge is, as explained in the Yoga Sutras of Patanjali and referred to later, achieved by the three-fold process comprising Dhyana, Dharana and Samadhi *i.e.*, directing the mind towards the object, continuation of the effort repeatedly and lastly by the mind becoming the object for the time being. Everyone does normally apply this process to a greater or less extent in acquiring knowledge of anything. The more persistently and keenly the process is carried out the clearer and firmer is the knowledge so acquired. Such knowledge is what is acquired by personal experience. But there are other means of acquiring valid knowledge of the objective world such as by inference, verbal testimony and so forth. There are various schools of Indian Philosophy relying on varying number of means of acquiring valid knowledge extending upto ten.

But when we turn to subjective knowledge, about which we have more to say later on, all other means are of no avail and the only means available is experience. Experience alone is the Truth and no one can transcend his own experiences. Subjective knowledge leads to the revelation of one's own "Self" and hence the knowledge derived from others is of no help.

There are said to be two ways of arriving at such knowledge, namely the path of reasoning and the path of intuition. Some follow the one and some the other path. But when these two paths are examined critically it will be found that there is no fundamental difference between them, for both rest on one's experiences. Reasoning presupposes a mass of data collected from one's experiences and these we may call immediate or what have been gathered during one's life-time. For intuition likewise, such data have to be available, without which a revelation is not possible. A revelation is the very essence of a vast mass of knowledge derived from experience. But in this case the knowledge or experience lies latent since it has been acquired in prior lives, so that, on repeated reflection, the result in the shape of a great central idea flashes in one's Consciousness appearing to be an inspiration. Really, it is as much the result of prior efforts. Briefly then we may say that reasoning is done on the basis of immediate set of experiences while inspiration or intuition arises out of past experiences. Thus both faculties require a strong and well laid foundation of experiences.

Now, since mind is the instrument by which both kinds of knowledge have to be acquired, we shall take up the enquiry into the nature of the mind and its multifarious activities and forms. The highest knowledge is the knowledge of the mind itself.

CHAPTER V

MIND AND WORLD

The world is to us all that is perceptible to our senses, whether with or without external aids. For instance, the scope of our senses is magnified by instruments such as telescope, microscope, hearing aids and so forth. Our own body is also a part of this world, for to the senses the body is also an object of perception. The senses without external aids have a limited range of perception and the world perceived is also limited. With instruments devised so far and those that may be devised, we may begin to perceive much that we may have not imagined this world to contain before, but we cannot on that account say that our senses cannot be relied upon to have full understanding of the world. For any ingenious device that may be invented has still to be interpreted through the senses and can still be only an extension of the senses. So ultimately we have to fall back every time on these senses of ours to analyse the world, to interpret and understand.

The world then is nothing else but what is comprehended by the five senses, through the sense organs. It is made up of the five elements Akasa, Motion, Tejas, Water (fluidity) and Earth (solidity). They are cognised by us by anyone or more of our sense perceptions which are of the nature of electrical impulses or movement merely. Such impulses set up images or impressions in the brain matter and simultaneously give rise to acts of cognition. *This act of cognition consists in correlating the image in*

the brain matter with the external object and identifying the two. This can clearly be done only by another agency which does not partake of the nature of either of the two and which is just a Witness and a means of understanding. The entire process in brief is this. The phenomenal world comprising of the five elements is resolved into different types of vibrations and perceived by means of the five sense organs by a common Witness. And this process is going on continuously, except when we are in a deep sleep. This movement or impulse which is a sort of connecting link between the Witness or Consciousness and the external world is known as Chith and there is no equivalent English word for it, since the word "Mind" is inadequate to express it properly and since it represents only a degenerate form of Chith.

For clearness of understanding, the Chith may be conceived of as a primary vibration ever in evidence as long as life lasts. This vibration keeps surging simultaneously in the body and in the all pervading Consciousness. This disturbance arising in Consciousness gives rise to perceptions in the brain and to life processes in the body. When the physical body is no longer kept vibrant by Chith it is said to be dead. But the vibration in the all - pervading Consciousness does not cease thereby. With the death of the body the impressions in the brain matter are destroyed and they cannot make themselves felt in the succeeding lives. But the vibrations in space do not subside and they find a fresh body to manifest themselves and continue their activity. Hence *vasanas i. e.*, experience of prior lives, must be presumed to exist as a space charge.

This vibration is universal in character and in this aspect the word "Chith" is used. With reference to the physical frame it is spoken of as "Prana". This universal vibration or Chith gives rise to the fivefold perceptions in the human body. In another animal with fewer sense organs it gives rise to a corresponding number of perceptions; in trees and plants to scarcely anything that can be called a perception but it keeps them vibrant with life and so on. Perceptual life then is simply experiencing the phenomenal world as an object of one, two, three, four or five different sense impressions and this embraces life in all stages of evolution.

Now let us proceed to consider this phenomenal world. In the first place it is revealed to us, that is to our minds, by the fivefold sense impressions and so it cannot but be identical with the sense impressions. It is therefore an object of Experience of each living entity. The world concept then must be related to everyone's own experience or in other words one's own experience is really his external world. With these premises let us proceed further.

Ordinarily by the word "World" is understood the outer physical universe as determined by geographers and astronomers of today. But how many of the 2700 million inhabitants of the Earth have any concept of this precise scientist's world. Very very few indeed. Even the few that may agree generally on the broad outlines may differ among themselves regarding the details. Again, even among those

who have exact comprehension of the world picture, how few moments in thier lives are actually devoted to the thought of this world? The so called "True World" does not enter into the daily life of the people. It is just a mental concept in each person and no two human beings have the same or identical concept of the world.

Then this world concept is not a fixed or unvarying thing. Our ideas about it are continuously changing from age to age and even today we may not be considered to have the last word to say about it. Our ideas are subject to change, as fresh discoveries are made and a new world picture is likely to present itself before us anytime. So then the inert outer world is not an exactly determinable and constant thing at any time to anybody.

Next consider whether this static physical world has any significance or purpose in itself. Obviously not. It assumes a meaning only if related to the life processes going on in it. Apart from such processes and except as providing a foundation for them, this external world has no other purpose. It must be considered conjointly with the life stream for which and by which it has been brought into existence.

In fact it is the human mind that has explored its vastness and all that it contains and has given it name and form. At all times the world is limited to what the mind of man has been able to say about it and no more and no less. And everyone's comprehension of the world differs from everybody else's.

It is not the human species alone that has to deal with the world about it. The animal kingdom and the plant life also have to deal with the world about them and have equal claims to proclaim their concept of the world forming part of their experience. The varying species among them present an endless variety of world pictures and so thoroughly different from the human concept that the expression "World" ceases to have any meaning or significance.

It is clearly wrong then to speak of a world as there really is no such thing with a common content or basis even with reference to a few.

Whatever, however, each one's concept of external geographical world may be, it does not in any way participate in the evolutionary process of the individual. The true world for everyone, with which he is concerned and which enters into his scheme of life, comprises only his wife and children and his surroundings, immediate and far, his kith and kin, near and remote, his friends far and near, his religion, beliefs and theories and lastly, his country and all that comes within the scope of these in his mental horizon. This is the world with which he deals in his daily life and which fashions his life process. This is an extremely limited world and differs so entirely from the world of the scientists which has no bearing on life and which is consequently a fantasy of the few. The word "World" can only be defined in relation to each individual and is just his extreme surroundings and all its contents participating in his evolutionary process.

The world is only a series of ideas in One's own mind which is projected outside. It is just as large as the capacity and content of his mind and no more. It is nothing but a reflection of his mind. All that we know exists in our minds as ideas and our actions are induced by the promptings from within and not by what may actually exist outside. Our idea of what we see is not the same as the thing itself. Thus everyone lives in a world of his own and there exists as many worlds simultaneously as there are inhabitants on this globe.

In this analysis of the Mind and the World, we can for a moment draw a comparison between the general features that are noticeable in human existence, which we may call the internal world, and the external world. We considered them earlier as two separate flows or movements; let us now see what they have in common

1. In the external universe one sees firstly the self luminous sun which illumines the entire universe and sustains all life; secondly the moon which shines by the reflected light of the Sun and which is equally necessary to sustain life and lastly the Earth which is the seat of all manifested life and which exists solely by the radiations from the Sun, Moon and the Stars- In the internal universe, we see a like system comprising firstly of the Witness or Intelligent principle which illumines the Mind as well as the body and which sustains the mental and the concomitant physical life of all creatures. Then we have the Mind which shines only by the reflected light of the Witness and lastly the physical body akin to the Earth, furnishing the abode for the manifestation of mental activity.

2. In the external universe, we have the five principle Planets Mars, Venus, Mercury, Saturn and Jupiter, determining the course of the moon and in us we have the five sense organs providing the means of determining mental movement.

3. In the external universe, we have the five principle elements out of which the material world is evolved; and in us we have the five senses out of which our mental life is evolved.

4. The sun is the centre of the visible universe and radiates its heat and light to the entire solar system and remains to all intents and purposes fixed in space, creating, sustaining and destroying all the time without respite. While the Moon, in constant attendance on the earth and separated physically by several hundreds of thousands of miles but exerting its mellowing and life giving influences all the time, is constantly rotating, together with the earth, round the Sun. But the delusion that we experience, is that the Earth remains stationary and that the Sun rotates round the Earth. This sort of delusion is experienced in our own selves too, as we think that the Witness is responsible for all our activities, whereas in fact it remains in perfect repose, but permeating all, while the Mind through the agency of the body and by the mere presence of the Witness carries on all the activities. No sort of activity is however possible in either spheres without the Sun in one and Witness in the other respectively.

5. Then the conception of time is derived by the relative motions of the Moon with Earth and the Sun in the physical Universe and by the movement of the Mind and Body in relation to the Witness in the mental sphere which results in a series of mental images being formed. The sequence of images when perceived in perspective gives rise to the illusions of time space phenomena.

6. The Moon's course in the heavens is marked by the twelve signs of the Zodiac and so also does the human body furnish twelve sections for the Mind to move along such as: (1) Skull with the brain; (2) Eyes; (3) Nose; (4) Mouth; (5) The Ears; (6) The Skin; (7) The Chest; (8) The Stomach; (9) The genital and excretory organs; (10) Thighs; (11) The Lower Leg and (12) The Feet. The spinal column is akin to the celestial Equator and afferent and efferent nervous channels to the North and South declinations. While we breathe, we may notice that the process goes on alternatively with the right and left nostril only, *i. e.*, only one lung is in activity at a time. The change from one lung to the other occurs at periodical intervals. This corresponds to the apparent motion of the sun to the North and South of the Equatorial line.

7. The Sun creates everything out of the five elements. So also does the Witness lend itself to the creation of all mental units out of the five different sense perceptions, such as seeing, hearing etc. What else is the Mind except a composite vibration comprising of these five vibrations of different frequency ranges?

8. Consider the course of a day in the external Universe and again in the internal. A day of bright sunshine and cheer passes on through dream or the semi-conscious stage to deep sleep. From sleep one passes again through the dream stage to come back to wakefulness in the same manner that the night passes through the morning twilight before the day breaks. The day passing through the evening twilight ends in night.

9. Further, we note that in the full blaze of the sun, the moon cannot be perceived. nor in the moonlight can the sun be seen. In like manner, when Consciousness (the Witness) shines in its own nature, the mind is not perceived as it is devoid of any function; but while the mind is functioning the Witness behind is lost sight of. In the subdued light of the sun, the moon can be seen in the eastern or western skies but at no time during the illumination by the Moon, neither at its palest nor brightest aspect, can the sun be witnessed. In an identical manner one realises the functioning of the Mind in the dim light of the Witness but at no time while the mind is functioning is the Witness ever felt. There is no darkness and no moon when the sun shines brightly. Neither is there ignorance nor the functioning of the mind in the full blaze of the Witness.

10. When the moon, in its Monthly course round the Earth, passes further and further away from the sun until it gets behind the Earth on the New Moon day there is total

darkness and when it subsequently begins to move nearer and nearer to the sun reaching its closest proximity to the sun on Full Moon day, there is bright light from the Moon in its full glory. Similarly too, the Mind is in total darkness when it turns away from the Witness and gets steeped in sense enjoyments but when it turns towards the Witness it becomes clearer and clearer until it shines like the Witness.

The difference in the two sets of phenomena arises only in this that whereas the motion of the moon and the planets are fixed, giving rise to more or less constant and unvaried behaviour, the movement of the Mind is inconstant and hence its vagaries unpredictable. Any disturbed state of the Mind under love or anger and so forth is accompanied by physical contortions in the same manner that disturbances in the material universe are accompanied by tempest, earthquakes, sun spots and so forth.

11. It is therefore but natural and logical to conclude that our body, placed in the atmosphere of the five Elements under the influence of the sun, moon and the starry heavens and continuously acted upon by these material environments, should be considered as a universe in miniature.

12. Finally the entire material universe is just a phenomenon in the boundless empty Akasa, so also are these manifested beings in relation to the Supreme Being or the Witness. What is the sky or Akasa?

The appearance as a bluish expanse is an optical illusion; in fact, it is an empty nothing, as it does not participate in or attach itself to anything happening in it, although it is all pervasive. But nothing can exist without it and only in this way can it be said to be the cause of the material universe. So also is the Witness the cause of the individual or particularised existence.

13. Are these then, viz., the Witness of the manifested beings and the Akasa of the external universe, two different things? Can they be?

Before concluding this chapter we may consider to whom this perceptual world has a significance? What is the object of probing into the mysteries of the Universe and unravelling them one after another? It is not merely for the advancement of science, not for the glory nor thrill of achievement and not even for the satisfaction of having conquered Nature. No! emphatically not, for any of these purposes, even though these might appear to be the motives which prompt the enquiry and the search. There is a far deeper urge, namely to secure oneness with Nature. Every effort of any being, of whatever species it may belong to, whether in appeasing hunger or obeying any of the other natural instincts or in satisfying the pleasures of the senses, ends in the enjoyment of peace following the strife. It is like the state of calmness following the storm, a state of dissolution of the mind or oneness with Nature. Every sort of effort is a disturbance arising in this natural or neutral or permanent state and must after a while subside back into it like waves of the ocean.

CHAPTER VI.

MIND AND THE PHYSICAL BODY

To the last chapter we said that life process is entirely mind process in relation to its surroundings. This process has two aspects ; firstly the effort to continue manifestation of its existence, which it achieves through the physical frame and sense organs and secondly, the modifications which it undergoes by reason of the sense impressions from the outside world. The former has to do with the sustaining of the physical body through food, air and light and maintaining its manifestation. The latter has to do with its self expression by way of reactions to external stimuli. Let us consider these two aspects separately and in detail.

The effort to persist which the human species exhibits in common with others endowed with life, as the animals and plants, and which it derived from them, is the prime factor of life. This differs from that of the inanimate world only in that the latter persist without undergoing any change of form or characteristics by themselves. The human species, in common with other living beings, on the other hand, is distinguished by this particular feature. According to the surroundings and conditions, men exhibit changes in their characteristics and from plant to animal and animal to human species the adaptability increases. Man is the most adaptable creature. That is why he shows such an illimitable variety both in structure and individual characteristics. 'Amidst the continual change life persists.

What is change due to? Amidst common environment and exactly identical conditions as to food, home atmosphere and schooling, children with scarcely any previous experience show each an individuality of their own. Children of the same parents show extraordinarily differing characteristics of mind and even of body. If we however consider this aspect lower down the scale of evolution we find that differences are less and less and in the earliest species there will be practically no differences. This leads us immediately to the inference that the cause of differentiation is in mind phenomenon, which in animals is known as instinct. In the human species therefore it is not possible to forecast correctly about even the external form of the children from a knowledge of the characteristics of the parents. Even the bodily shape of the child about to be born may not partake of the nature of either parent. Unless the child is presumed to have an individuality of its own, which by the way cannot be accounted for by the presumption of a single life span and which must therefore be persisting from prior life experiences, such variations in physical form and mental equipment among the human species cannot be explained.

The physical body and its various organs are dependent for their general makeup not only on external physical circumstances but also on the presiding Mind. The body of each individual bears the impress of the mind to which it serves as a tool. If the mind by its imaginative faculty develops new tastes for the fulfilment of which it needs new

organs, it will bring them into being without doubt or if it finds no need for some organ or other by inventing new contrivances for fulfilling its purpose, it will certainly discard the organ and future generations will find only the traces of the organ as a biological relic. So then the physical frame, although broadly fashioned by the external physical circumstances, such as food, light, air and climatic environments, is bound to undergo gradual changes in its makeup in the course of ages by reason of psychological changes brought about by the evolution of society.

In short, the constituents of the physical body consist of the elements of Nature, not susceptible to change or growth by themselves, but by virtue of their being enlivened by the Mind, they are made to undergo so many transformations for its own purpose. The resulting physical makeup is then a medium for harmonious interaction of internal trends and the outer environment. If any change arises in either of these two factors and if this should persist then the body begins to undergo a change to re-establish a new equilibrium.

Summing up our ideas about the physical body, in the first place it is just an accessory of the mind and serves only to obey the behests of the mind and is devoid of volition by itself. Secondly its growth is dependent largely on external environment and conditions but it undergoes at the same time gradual modifications during long periods of time by the influence of the mind. The body continues to

exist only as long as it is needed by the mind and ceases to exist when the mind seeks another body to fulfil its purposes.

Let us consider now the second aspect, namely the sense impressions of the outside world, which arouse various mental feelings in us. Whence arise these feelings? What are they characterised by? Objects of perception in themselves are not characterised by any of these phenomena since the same objects, be they inert matter or other living beings, evoke varied feelings in different individuals. Each being responds differently to the same object or set of circumstances at different times. Things in themselves, therefore, are featureless and devoid of any such characteristics. Nor is the Witness possessed of any attributes since it cannot then be a Witness nor give rise to perceptions; these then must form part of that which moves between the Witness and the external objects. But Chhā is a universal movement and cannot suffer any change in itself by these characteristics lest it should lose its universality. We already stated that it is just a primary vibration common to the entire phenomenal world and so cannot of itself generate or give rise to these characteristics. These then can only be considered to be superposed on the primary vibration. These superpositions take place in the particular entity, human or animal, and characterise it alone and are peculiar to it. They are not universal in character but are peculiar to each individual. They give rise to individuality or differentiation.

All these so called mental feelings are superposed vibrations on the primary movement, that is Chith, and in this state we have what is called "Mind" in human beings and "instinct" in the lower orders of creation. Mind then is nothing but the collective individual reactions to external stimuli, *i.e.*, the second aspect of the mind. A group of beings may react similarly to the same external stimulus. That depends purely on common local circumstances, common environment, common training and so forth. Such sameness of reactions are much more common in the lower orders of beings, which are less discriminating, than in man who has powers of differentiation developed to an extreme degree. Individuality is therefore much more pronounced in man than in other creatures.

One point particularly has to be noted here. The means of perception are five in number but any one or more of these can raise differing reactions in individuals. These reactions alone are individual in character while the incident vibrations are the same and any mental feelings may be aroused through any one of the five perceptions. There is then no fixed relationship between the mental feelings and perceptions *per se*. But such relationship gets established in each individual and hence it is of purely individual interest.

Mind then comprises of a bundle of individual reactions to *physico-electrical* external impulses. Such reactions are manifested in *electro-physical* actions. In popular language they are termed stimuli and reactions.

This means that for a given or common external world of perceptions there are innumerable (as many in number as there are human beings) mental worlds. Each being has and lives in a world of his own. No two worlds agree. The world is a myth or at best it is no more than a group of mental concepts. Such mental differences constituting superposed vibrations on the fundamental and universal vibration "Chith" arise out of the differences in the individual experiences. By experience is meant not only the perception of external physical objects, circumstances and events but also abstract ideas, concepts and faiths and the resulting emotions which become part and parcel of the individual and go to make up the sum total of his experience. By their permutations and combinations they present an endless variety of differing minds (composite vibrations) or men.

We shall now examine what we call mental feelings or emotions, varying degrees of which make up a large part of the differences between men and men and between one race and another. Such feelings are mere modes of the mind, lasting for a time and then being succeeded by another mode according to the objects, be they concrete or abstract, presented before it from time to time. The differences among the various individuals consist in the intensity of such emotional outbursts, their duration and frequency. Rare indeed are the occasions when a person is not in any of these modes and is totally restful. The wise ones, who have cultivated control of such ebullitions are

generally restful and rarely do they give expression to their feelings, whereas the generality of men, who possess no more than a feeble control over their feelings, react frequently and quickly to incident impulses and exhibit a variety of mental moods. The totally ignorant are also impervious to external impressions and they are also characterised by a general absence of changing moods but they are stupidly restful. They are little better than the lower orders of creation.

In order to understand what a mental feeling or mode of the mind is, we must enquire into the nature of external impulses and the reactions they induce. A little knowledge of the physiology of the body is also necessary. Let us consider an external impulse such as the sight of an object and examine the process by which the cognition of the object takes place.

In the first place the physical object is transformed into light and shadows by the light rays, which pass through the aperture of the eyes and imping on the retina, which is a system of nerves connected with the eye at one end and the brain matter at the other end. These rays excite the retina and raise the potential of the spot enabling an electric impulse to be sent to the appropriate region of the brain. The current sets up a disturbance in the brain cells momentarily giving rise to the act of cognition in some mysterious way. The mechanism or rather the phenomena of sight takes place exactly as in a television camera.

The individual brain cells radiate the image in the surrounding space. The act of cognition consists, in popular language, in identifying this image with the object. This is done by the universal Chith, which here pervades the tree and the brain matter. Similar processes take place with cognition through the other four sense organs and senses. In the case of hearing, a mechanical vibration of the tympanum, set up by the sound waves, is transformed into electric current ; in tasting chemical action sets up the electric current and so on.

In all these cases it may be noted that at one end of the process there is a material object and at the other end what we call the phenomena of cognition by some mysterious process and connecting the two is a movement one way or the other. The phenomenon from the object towards Consciousness is known as perception and from Consciousness towards the object is known as imaginative activity. Such imaginative activity can only arise out of the stored up contents of prior cognitions which we call memory. In the first process *i.e.*, cognition, the process embraces three planes *i.e.*, a material plane, the subtle or mental plane and lastly the plane of Consciousness ; in the reverse process *i.e.*, imaginative activity, the material plane is excluded as the content of memory is only a reflection of the original object in Consciousness and is purely in the mental plane.

In these processes we note that there is nothing to generate a mental feeling, or mode of mind. The mind can

only remain in one of two states, either in the act of perceiving or reflecting. Feelings are foreign to the processes. They are clearly an importation.

These feelings arise really out of the importation of an extraneous idea as the sense of "I" creating the relationship of subject and object and all the evils following from it. This is called the false "Ego" or "Self", for while the true "Self" identifies itself with everything in the world and is in fact everything, the false self differentiates itself from everything. All become extraneous to it. It is this false "Self" that gives rise to the whole train of mental feelings headed by the prime feelings "love and hate". With the rise of this false self arises immediately the pair of modes, desire and aversion, in one of which state the self is bound to be associated with normally. In the natural state the false self disappears and is dissolved in the true "Self". The particular merges in the universal. Mental feelings or modes then, which form our life course and which are not characteristic of anything in the objective world, are truly unreal and only imagined, along with the false self. No doubt such feelings can be aroused by contact with the objective world. But the objective world in all these cases is no more than a sort of catalyst since it does not undergo any change although it induces various feelings in the minds that come in contact with them. Thus we see that our mental feelings are all of our own doing; they are imagined and not real and denote a disturbed state of the otherwise balanced mind.

All our life's efforts and all our aims and ambitions end in these mental modes. They are the very essence of life. A vast quantity of food is consumed by us daily only to secure a few grains perhaps in each of protein, starch, sulphur, phosphorus etc. and still minuter doses of vitamins. These sustain the physical framework. With all that, it is the taste of the food that the mind enjoys and which is the essence of the feeding. Similar is the case with the other sense enjoyments. All human endeavour is directed towards securing these various mental modes. They make up the individuality of the person.

From the foregoing it is seen that life process or mental movement can be manifested only in a physical body and that there are two aspects in such manifestation, namely (1) what is bound up with the existence of sustenance of the body and (2) what goes on in the subtle plane as its emotional life. There is still another function, namely imagination constituting three in all, making up the totality of its manifestation. Let us consider them all here in detail.

1. The fundamental aspect of the life process is connected with the upkeep of the physical body. The physical and physiological members of the body participating in the function are the hands and legs together with the trunk, out of which the former two serve to secure the food and feed the body. The body proper contains feeding and digestive organs, the excretory organs, the blood, circulating system and the respiratory system in the main, which maintain the body. The various functions take place automatically under the influence of a central nervous current

in the spinal cord, the lower end of which is the pivot so to say of these various functions. In fact the bottom end of the spinal cord, said to be curved to a semicircle and known as Kundalini, is the centre of the body in all aspects and has to do with the present existence.

2. The secondary aspect connected with existence, which in the human species takes the primary place, is the emotional life developed by the five sense perceptions, through the sense organs. The centre of this activity is the other end of the spinal cord terminating in the brain matter. The primary purpose of these sense organs is to reveal the intimate relationship between the external world and the physical body. The two are in continuous process of interaction.

Next these sense perceptions and the accompanying reactions of the individual are recorded in the brain matter, which are subsequently remembered as memories. The brain matter, therefore, is essentially intended as a storehouse of past events. It holds however not merely the records of the present life process but also of previous lives and of the many species that preceded it before being developed into the human form.

The brain matter representing the past lives and the Kundalini representing the present existence are connected together by the spinal cord. It is natural then that the past and the present are woven into a single whole by the interconnecting link. That is how the present existence, marked by the various physiological processes, is influenced

by the sense perceptions and reactions originating in the upper chamber and *vice versa*.

There is a third important aspect of life which is connected with the reproduction of the species, represented by the generative organs. This has to deal with the future and is naturally influenced by the past and the present represented by the whole central nervous system comprising the brain matter spinal cord and the terminal end. The past, present and future are all then woven into the texture of the body.

The process of life is maintained in the following manner. There is a flow of nervous current from the brain to the Kundalini through the spinal cord, which simultaneously sends a current in the whole afferent nervous system. This flow of current is alternated by a flow in the opposite direction from the Kundalini to the brain matter with a simultaneous flow of current in the efferent system of nerves. This process goes on continuously during the entire period of existence. It marks the sign of life and as soon as this process comes to an end, life is said to be extinct and the body becomes inert. This secondary current induced in the body by the all pervading movement designated as Chith is known as prana and is induced by the first.

These nerve currents are maintained in a singular manner. The downward current is generated by the fundamental movement Chith which embraces and vibrates the totality of the universe. This subtle movement is transformed into a nervous current through the medium of the brain matter. Then the upward nervous current starts

from the Kundalini and terminates in the brain matter and is there transformed to the subtle movement. There is thus a surging of flow downwards and upwards, each surge being marked by a transformation from the subtle to the physical plane and vice versa. It is this constant alternating flow that maintains an even temperature of the body and also induces activity in all the organs.

This alternating flow downwards and upwards is the carrier current and is truly Cosmic activity. It is what sustains all manner of life and non-life. Without this fundamental activity we cannot conceive of any other activity in the universe. Every other activity of whatever nature rides on so to say or clings to the Cosmic activity for its manifestation. The human mind cannot function if it is not roused to activity by the Cosmic activity. The minutest cell organism likewise cannot sustain itself without being spurred into activity by the Cosmic activity and lastly inanimate matter cannot preserve its unvarying properties without being sustained by the same universal activity.

This is the primary life process, on which is superposed the five sense perceptions and the corresponding reactions of the individual; all of which together constitute what is known as mind and mental movement, which may be thought of as a composite vibration for clearness of understanding.

The universal movement of Chith, as we already indicated in the first chapter, is a pure and subtle activity, common to all species endowed with what we call life. At this stage there is no differentiation which however sets in

later by reason of the sense perceptions and reactions. The diversity in the range and degree to which these are developed and manifested marks the differences between the various species and between various units of the same species.

We saw how the physical body is but a self-expression of the mind and how it serves the sole purpose of affording a playground for its activities. We also considered how the mind is like a continuous stream marked off by stages in the form of death of one body and rebirth in another. The course of the flow and the stages marking off this flow must obey certain laws evolved by itself. What the law governing it, is now clearly and firmly established beyond all doubt. There are two schools, of thought, namely (1) those who believe in free-will and (2) others who believe in Destiny. We shall discuss about this subject in a later chapter.

CHAPTER VII.

MIND, TIME, SPACE AND LAW OF CAUSATION

SECTION 1.

We have so far considered Mind in relation to (1) the external perceptual world and (2) the physical body. How these two phenomena depend on mind for their existence and change has been amply discussed.

The picture of the external world is however not complete without the concomitant factors of time and space and the law of causation. Neither the physical body nor the outer world is static; they are both observed to be subject to continual changes and this change takes place only in terms of time and space. If time-space factors are not taken into account, there will be a series of disconnected phenomena without any relationship to one another. There can be no proper and connected concept of the world. In fact a change cannot arise except in terms of time and space.

Next we see that time and space are mutually dependent phenomena. The one cannot be conceived without the other, for both are derived from the principle of motion and every motion is attendant with displacement in both time and space. These two form two co-ordinates of a system which defines correctly every event in the world. No

event can be completely defined without a reference to the two co-ordinates. Both again are apparently continuous flows, space being a flow involving the principle of extension and at a particular instant of time ; time being a flow over any specified duration. To traverse space time is involved and any interval of time always involves a passage in space. Thus the two kinds of movements attending every act and circumstance in life are involved in each other and they are both simple extensions of the one principle of motion in two sets of co-ordinates.

But motion cannot be cognised except in relation to some other thing which may either be static or in relative movement. This is the cognising mind which is also a movement of a different nature taking place in Consciousness. Mind also represents constant changes but it is not synchronous with the time and space flows. Mind functions only intermittently, this instant cognising next instant reposing. It is because of its alternate activity and repose that it is able to cognise time and space flows. If the mind were stationary as when it is coconcentrated on a single object or idea, or if the movement of mind were to be at the same rate as time and space flows, when there is absence of cognition of flows in the one case and absence of relative movement in the other case respectively, both of which result in non-cognition.

Hence we see that mental phenomena as well as time and space factors have generally to be considered together since they are mutually dependent on one another. The

significance of the word "generally" will be explained presently. In fact, time-space phenomena have no significance except in relation to the mind that experiences them. But although these two sets of phenomena are interdependent, the measure of time and space is not altogether a fixed one. There are, no doubt, units of time and space bearing a fixed relationship to the relative movement of the earth and the sun and to the size of the earth respectively. These may be fixed and unalterable quantities. But they are set at naught by the experiencing mind. The pace of time or space flow is determined solely by the mood of the mind that experiences them. If the mind is working rapidly time seems to flow rapidly too, or if it works slowly, time seems to hang heavily; so also with space. After all everything in the world has to be considered only in relation to our experience. It is the mind that becomes the measure of time and space and not the earth's rotation or size. Hence intervals of time or space have to be spoken of only with reference to each individual's mind. The same interval of time may be experienced differently by different people or by the same person on different occasions, depending on his mood. A life of 60 years may be a long drawnout and tedious affair for a villager with sedentary habits and of slow thinking. But for an active city man, more than usually busy, it might seem to be a short period. The latter man's life may be packed with incidents and experiences that might last 3 or 4 spans of another man's life. Hence it is purposeless to speak of definite durations

of time without reference to a particular person, community or nation. At best they serve as a rough universal guide and standard of comparison.

One question often arises, namely whether time and space are realities, that is to say, whether they have an independent existence. This question was answered in the previous paragraph. Time and space do not exist apart from the Mind. If mind were not, they both cease to be too, for there is nothing else to experience them. They are coeval. They are real in relation to mind only.

Time and space treated purely objectively have no great significance nor fulfil any purpose. They acquire a purpose only when brought into relation with the mind which experiences them. In this relationship with animate existence they constitute an experience. In life we are therefore concerned only with our experiences of these phenomena.

Now let us consider how this experience, subdivided into three groups, namely, waking, dream and deep sleep is differentiated in the three states. In deep sleep, time is swallowed up; and the experiences in the other two states have no sort of relationship with each other. The measures of time are different and they are mutually incommensurable. Thus, truly speaking we cannot correlate the waking time of one day with that of the next, as there is no continuity and since dream and deep sleep phenomena interpose themselves between them. But then our memory which

plays the trick of establishing a sort of continuity between the waking time series of successive days, is assumed by us to be sufficiently good and true for carrying on our day to day affairs.

CONTINUITY

We have already stated that mind functions like lightning flashes and its speed exceeds that of light, as it can reach the remotest star in an instant while it would take thousands of years for light to reach it. So when mind focusses itself on the objective world through the sense organs, which are highly sluggish, millions of vibrations are actually taken in at once. But these vibrations are released, one train following another, comparatively slowly by the brain matter on account of its inertia. Thus points of space without extension and moments of time having no duration alone are valid with respect to mind but fettered as it is with imperfect organs, we seem to experience continuity in space and time. Continuity is then a trick played by the sluggish brain and is in any case a delusion.

INFINITY

By its very definition we know that it is something which is outside mind's compass and hence it should not be brought into any sort of relationship with finite quantities. Thus it would be absurd to say that any quantity added to or subtracted from infinity does not

alter it. This is mental delusion. What is not comprehensible by the mind has no relationship at all with the mind and so it would be ridiculous to make computations with it.

Thus both continuity and infinity seem to be discredited in terms of mind. But they can be spoken of only in contrast to points and finiteness respectively, as otherwise all of them cease to have any significance. Thus points and continuity are two different aspects of the mind, so also finiteness and infinity.

TIME-SPACE PERCEPTION IS ASSOCIATED WITH OBJECTIVE WORLD

Let us suppose that the earth is knocked off from below our feet. We will then find ourselves in the vast emptiness of space and we can then have no conception of the passage of time nor of direction, nor even of our exact location. Neither the flow of time nor the motion in space can be experienced by the mind, for until mind has associated itself with concrete objects and has formed ideas of dimensions and relative movements, it can form no conception of time or space. What cannot be experienced is as good as non-existent, since their existence cannot be determined except by the experiencing mind.

When space and time concepts are absent how would mind function? Objects then have no dimensions for the mind and time consciousness disappears and with it memory and imagination; for imagination depends on previous experiences stored in the form of memory and

memory in turn depends on repeated impressions being formed in the mind. But when all objects around are vague and indistinct on which mind cannot fasten itself, there can be no lasting impressions nor memory. Hence apparent changes taking place in the outer world cannot be taken cognisance of. Hence when mind sheds time and space concepts it is transformed into the witnessing Consciousness and will no longer be in the state which we call mind, which may be said to be Consciousness functioning within the limitations of time and space.

When for brevity of language we speak of Consciousness functioning within limitations, or of the static and dynamic aspect of Chith, it must not be literally understood to be fettered by any of these attributes. The attributes pertain to us; we view Consciousness or Chith from a static or dynamic aspect and hence the attributes are those of our minds.

We will next consider the law of causation. In the first place the sequence of cause and effect is bound up with time. There must always be a time interval and often perhaps a space interval between the two states. It is thus intimately bound up with time-space phenomena and is at the same time a product of the mind for it is the mind that relates them in reference to time and space.

CAUSE AND EFFECT:

Cause-Effect phenomena is also observable in the objective world but that is of no great significance to the

evolution of life. Things of the objective world are possessed of certain definite and more or less unalterable properties or attributes and hence interactions between them, giving rise to cause-effect phenomenon, do not hold any surprises. These can be unmistakably predicted as is done by Science. But we are concerned with Mind phenomena and we should not mix this up with what happens in the objective world as then the issues become confused.

When this phenomenon is applied to mind, the terms Effort and Result are more appropriate, for nothing in the phenomenal world takes place without effort, be it in Nature or in human affairs. No event happens in this world without willing and striving. It is not as if anything happens haphazardly without prior planning and this applies equally well to *natural phenomena*. Hence a result is always the outcome of a deliberate effort

Now let us examine the process by which a result is obtained and for clearness of understanding let us consider human effort. At first the person forms an idea, then he forms a desire whereon he ruminates over the idea again and again until he is possessed by it, as it were. Then he makes out his plans, weighs them and puts them into execution. He may meet with failures if his plans are ill conceived. He modifies them and finally succeeds; it does not matter to us in what time this happens. We now say that he has obtained the expected result. How is this result different from what he conceived in the mind originally?

They are ideotical except that there is a time and probably a space displacement. In association with time-space phenomena the events assume the form of Effort and Result, whereas if these extraneous phenomena be ignored for the moment, then the effect is ideotical with the cause. It is this phenomenon that is continuously taking place in a man's life and which constitutes his life work, comprising of his hopes and ambitions, yearnings and strivings, originating as a mental idea at first and culminating in fulfilment as an external act. A time interval is required for the solidification of the idea into a concrete substance or a physical act, depending upon the nature of the effort made and the circumstances, which act either favourably or otherwise. All the material substances about us, man-made inventions, contrivances adding to our comforts in life, originated as ideas of the mind and then took concrete shape and form. Looking at our own body, the various limbs and sense organs have been developed by the Cosmic activity in fulfilment of a necessity felt by its creatures. This is so with every event in the phenomenal world. If this idea is pushed to its extreme it will be apparent that all that manifests itself externally is already inherent and what is not so cannot manifest itself. The tree is latent in the seed, the birds in their eggs, animals in the womb and all these together with the material universe in the Chith that pulsates in all.

From the foregoing considerations, we may draw the following inferences :- (1) This phenomenal world, perceived by our senses, is no more than a physical representation

of ideas ; (2) Ideas, belonging to the mental plane, are not governed by time, place or the law of causation. (3) But translation from mental to physical plane can take place only in terms of time and space and is governed by the law of causation. (4) Time, space and causation are merely therefore features of the mind.

The relationship of time, space and causation with the mind is apparent only in the waking state. In dream state, mind functions without contact with the external physical world, *i. e.*, freed of its shackles and hence throws off the yoke of time, space and causation. And in deep sleep mind is dissociated from the body, as it were, amounting to a denial of conscious existence.

SECTION II

FATE vs FREE WILL

Having considered the subject "Effort and Result" we may briefly consider the oft debated problem which has exercised the minds of great thinkers of the East as well as West. No one however has dealt with it either in a scientific or conclusive manner, so that it remains unsolved until today. Only one of our ancient Rishis, Vasishta, has discussed it in a most realistic manner and has arrived at an unmistakable conclusion.

Before dealing with the question proper, it will be necessary to make ourselves quite clear about the widest meaning attached to the two expressions. Fate or Destiny

is intended to convey that the course of life of every individual is pre-determined either by an external agent or by one's own past conduct or by both. On the other hand the adherents to the theory of Free-will hold that every individual is at all times free to act as he chooses and there is no sort of constraint from any external or internal source. The problem can be spoken of only with reference to human beings.

Commonsense and observation would however indicate unmistakably that no one is governed either wholly by destiny, nor that any one acts entirely by Free-will. The truth lies between these two extreme positions.

It will be realised that both these terms are used with reference to the mental attitude for it is the mind that has to be influenced to act either under some external pressure or internal prompting on its own volition. The problem then resolves itself to this, namely, to establish whether the mind acts always under some influence or spontaneously, on each occasion. It is however well known that man is a creature of habits. These habits are so enslaving that few are able to break their bonds but on that score it may not be said that habits are unbreakable and that there are not some who are not such slaves. Anyhow this defines the mode of operation of the mind. It works *i.e.*, imagines, thinks, loves, hates etc. in certain grooves which it establishes by repeated modifications on those lines. But before every such modification there was always the freedom to suffer it or escape from it. That is to say, Free-will

is exercised at every first effort but when once a mental modification takes place in a particular manner, the tendency becomes established for the mind to act in the same manner on subsequent occasions. Repeated acts in the same manner establish a habit. But it is seen that it is a particular attitude of the mind that brings on desire and then habit. The contrary attitude should however develop a distaste for it, which would either wean one way from an established habit or at the first contact would prevent the habit being formed. The mind then is actually a free agent but ordinarily forges its own fetters.

If we next consider the desires and aspirations of each individual and how many of them bear fruition and how many do not, we are bound to conclude that these unrelieved stresses, set up by unrealised ambitions and unfulfilled longings, will have to be neutralised in a new lease of life. The new life then starts with these fetters. Such fetters forged in the previous life or lives, known as Vasanas, are what is understood by the word Destiny.

Destiny is then only the resultant motive force of past unrealised efforts influencing the present. It has no reference to the future except as shaped or connected with the present. On past efforts one has no control and can exert then no influence. The results must be experienced; nothing can change their course, not even God's grace. To this extent every individual is bound. Instances are quite common of persons having attained a high state of mental equipoise or having become a Jivan Mukta but still carrying the burden of life and its travails. These are the legacies of

the past bearing fruition *now*. The results of all unfulfilled past strivings and longings must be endured whether we will or not. There is no escape from them until the motive force is expended by bearing fruition and it is brought to zero potential. But one can mitigate their effects on oneself by changing one's mental outlook; which enables the same results being experienced differently

We must also realise the fact that any event in a man's life can happen in only one way. There are no possibilities of a future event happening in more than one way. Were it so then no future event would be predictable, but prediction is a fact of our experience. There are innumerable cases of remarkably accurate predictions and within the experience of most of us of distant future events in life, ruling out the remotest possibility of any guesswork. Nor can it be maintained that some events are predictable and others not. This would mean that cause-effect relationship is not universally true. So it is fundamentally wrong to think that a particular cause can give rise to differing effects for the simple reason that cause and effect are identical as was stated earlier. Moreover if predetermination were not to be true, then all efforts would be useless, since they would not end in results. Efforts can ripen to results only if predetermination were to be the law of life, that is, phenomenal life. Thus predetermination always follows the exercise of Free-Will at first.

Oftentimes efforts and results are displaced so much in time that we are led to doubt the basic phenomenon of cause and effect. Sometimes death intervenes making it

appear that effort has not borne fruit during the present life and yielding unexpected results in the next life. But there is none to make such gifts and a result can only be the outcome of a prior effort.

Sometimes we see sudden transformations as a good man turning bad or a bad person turning a saint. These mislead us into believing that they are exceptions to the law. It is not so. Such irrational things cannot happen in this most rational universe. All such transformations are the logical consequences of their own desires and efforts. But we misjudge some people. A bad man may be having a very strong inclination to turn over a new leaf during his career of wickedness, which may be running out. This does not warrant us to conclude that some irrational thing had happened. Nothing in this world or in our lives happens without a prior cause for it.

To say then that the past influences every moment of our lives now is however to admit only a partial truth. Their influence is there no doubt, but how they will effect us depends on us, not on them. For every individual has the freedom to do a thing at any instant in the right or the wrong way. The influence of the past may be impelling him to do it, say, in the wrong way and often he may succumb to it. But if one stopped to think for a while, then, even though he may be powerless to resist the tide of past influences in the first few efforts, he would by dint of persistent effort muster sufficient mental stamina to stem it. Gradually he would throw off the shackles of the past and secure for himself the Freedom that was his birthright.

If the exercise of Free-Will were not there, there can be no change at all in any one. But all people do change confirming the frequent exercise of free-will in every one.

In this way one can work off the influences of past efforts or Karma in a very short time by divesting oneself of the "Ego". In a single span of life the entire past may be wiped off, but even for this past efforts are necessary. The potency of the past or Destiny is therefore limited and varies with the mental makeup of the individual. Freedom is as much in everyone's grasp, as one is a victim of past influences. If one does not exercise his Free-Will, as often as he may, it is because he does not stop to think and enquire. If he does so, then he can proudly hoist the banner of Freedom in a reasonable time. Freedom and not thralldom should be the watchword of every individual in every sphere and aspect of life, however strong the influences of the past may be.

CHAPTER VIII.

THE CONTENTS OF THE MIND AND MENTAL PROCESSES

SECTION I. THE LOCATION OF MIND

We have established that Mind is just like a composite vibration, the fundamental component of which is universal in character, while the other components are derived from perceptions of things external to the mind and the consequent reactions to such impulses. Hence the contents of the mind must comprise only of (1) ideas of the external world existing as disturbances or to use a scientific term vibrations, received through the five sense organs and (2) the reactions consequent thereon. Nothing but the two groups of ideas can come within the range of the Mind's compass. The two sets of phenomena are not peculiar to the human species; they are characteristic of the animal and plant worlds as well. But what distinguishes the human species from the animal and plant kingdom is its rich imaginative faculty by which the two sets of phenomena are recalled as and when desired and held before the mind, setting up a particular mood. And what is more, new ideas are created which add to the store of the mind. The reactions are comparatively pure and untinged in the plant world, whereas in the human species they are coloured and modified by imagination. The animal kingdom occupies an intermediate place between the two.

It must however be remembered that this imaginative faculty has not suddenly been acquired by the human species. It is noticeable in all species of living beings but to a gradually decreasing extent as we go down the evolutionary ladder. The reactions which each creature or plant exhibits are evidences of their imaginative faculty. The organs developed by each and every species are derived from their imaginative faculty. What characterises man is the abundance with which he is endowed with this faculty.

When we speak of the external world, our own body must also be considered to be included in the expression, since even this is as stated earlier external to the mind. Again this external world may comprise of both abstract and concrete things.

Now all the external things are transformed into vibrations, corresponding to each sense organ, and only as such they make up the Mind. Mind at no time deals with objects as such but only with images thereof, which become part and parcel of it. These are the incident vibrations or impulses which generate according to the individuality of the person, varying reactions in the form of moods such as pleasure, pain or fear etc. These two sets form the basis for the imaginative faculty which creates a new train of impulses adding to the content of the mind.

And now we have to consider a very important question which has not been investigated hitherto and that is to ascertain where the Mind actually exists. Without a proper

conception of this, we can form no idea of the Mind, nor find the means for the right path for Knowledge and Release. We have so far established only that all the contents of the Mind exist only as unsubstantial, ethereal vibrations. But where do they rest?

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It is evident that there are only two possibilities, viz., (1) they should be of an omnipresent nature vibrating in all space, or (2) they should be embedded in the material stuff of the brain. There is no other place of abode for the mind. If the Mind were associated only with the brain matter, then what agency releases the content off and on in the shape of memory? And what agency compels it into creative activity? The brain matter is after all a non-sentient substance having no volition and cannot release images by itself. An external agency is called for. If food or an emotional mood, or any external associate idea be presumed to be the agency then we must explain the functioning of the mind in a particular manner, under the play of the will, over-riding all impulses emanating from these sources. Again, with the death of the body, all the experiences and ideas of an individual should die with it. But empirical life exhibits quite a different state of affairs. Life exhibits, as we have shown in the earlier chapters, a state of continued and unending existence carrying with it a stamp of prior experiences. If prior experiences were to be associated only with the material stuff of the brain, then there is no possibility of their being carried forward to an after life since they are destroyed along with the body. In fact, for

experiences of yesterday, or of even a few minutes earlier would not be available now for recalling.

If on the other hand it is presumed that the Mind exists purely as a space vibration, then there is no function for the brain matter. These vibrations should then interact with those of other persons too and evoke identical responses in them, which however does not happen. It would also not be possible to bring this roving space vibration under one's control and recall past events as one likes.

The natural and logical inference then is that all experiences remain both as indelibly recorded images in the brain matter, as on a gramophone plate, and as space charges. Every act of perception sets up an indelibly recorded image in the brain matter and a stress in the space in and about the brain. A mental phenomenon such as a thought, an imaginative idea, or a memory of a past event to be awakened at one's will necessitates the existence of such a stress to produce a stream of mental content. If there were no stress, what could produce these impulses? Under the condition of no-stress or zero potential, no thought can arise, since non-sentient brain stuff cannot give rise to an impulse or idea in the mental plane.

It is only on this basis that it is possible to explain the carrying forward of the individuality of a person to succeeding lives. This will also explain a peculiar phenomenon which every one of us has experienced, namely that while intending to do a particular act we just do

something else unconsciously, because of having thought of more than one thing prior to the act. Even as the act is in progress we detect the fault and proceed to correct it. This is effected by the space charge, which carried the right impress and hence immediately after the act sends the right impulse to rectify the fault. No other explanation will satisfactorily answer this phenomenon noticed in our daily lives. This is due to the inertia of the brain matter which responds to the earlier of the two thought impulses. The space charge is detached after the impulse, detects the mistake and sends the right impulse at once. Thus all our experiences comprising of perceptions, reactions and imaginative creations are stored up simultaneously as impressions in the brain matter and space charges, making up a duplicate record. This is the very foundation of evolutionary process and except on this basis evolution would be inexplicable.

There is another phenomenon that is also common but for which an explanation scarcely exists. Often we have been confronted with various problems in life, which we have vainly attempted to solve, spending long hours on them day after day. Many of the inventions and discoveries of the world have been the result of such strenuous thinking by one person or another. And it is a fact that rarely has the solution been reached during the thinking process, *i.e.*, in conscious moments. Invariably has the problem solved itself and the result flashed into Consciousness most unexpectedly while the person is not thinking about the problem. Or

sometimes the person wakes up from sleep with the solution. How is this to be explained? The effort is there but the result does not appear to be the direct outcome of the effort. It would seem to be the act of an external agency although there can be none.

Still another phenomenon, not at all uncommon, may also be considered. We have often heard of or seen cases of children having shown extraordinary powers or proficiency all of a sudden. Such powers cannot be developed so suddenly and without effort. This phenomenon is not only noticeable in children but in grown up persons too.

Or again consider the dreams and visions of our forefathers of a bygone age materialising now. A pure mental concept of the past crystallises into an actual fact of life now. Our Puranas speak of aerial cars, rains of fire or clouds of smoke stupefying the senses having been used in warfare. We find them actualised now in the shape of modern aeroplanes, machine guns and gas bombs. The inventions and discoveries of today are invariably the dreams and visions of previous ages and our own dreams will be the achievements of a future age. This point will be further explained later on.

All these instances belong to the same category of mental phenomena and they can be explained only if the nature of the Mind is presumed to be as we have explained above *i.e.*, both as space charges and recorded images.

The phenomenon that takes place is that the material of the brain, being limited in its capacity for withstanding

stresses and being subject to fatigue, fails to respond after a certain degree of mental exertion. Whereas the space charge, simultaneously brought into play, settles down to a stable state or is sometime or other attuned to some other space charge when it suffers some change, becomes possessed, as it were, of the solution to the problem and at the next available opportunity interacts with the brain matter and brings out the solution of the problem to our Consciousness. This is just like the working of the Electronic brain which gives the result after all the necessary data have been fed into it. The very idea of this machine originates from the nature of working of the human-brain. This is how problems, unsolved during our conscious efforts, are solved for us. That is also how we suddenly find out some latent powers brought out all of a sudden in a particular state of mind. That is also how we conceive of great ideas, which had been tackled also in the past and been worked out little by little by successive generations and which finally blossom out into discoveries today. No other explanation will satisfactorily answer these phenomena. It is not to be imagined that all problems are solved for us in this manner. The earnestness of our own desires and the sincere and intelligent effort put in to achieve them bring about a similar result. In this case the rearrangement in the space charges takes place automatically and excites the brain cells into synchronism. Then the solution presents itself to our Consciousness.

We have yet to consider one aspect of Mind, namely its omnipresent nature. Its abode is not merely in the immediate

vicinity of the brain. It is able to reach the remotest star almost instantaneously and at such instants the Mind is with one leg on the brain and the other in the star while body consciousness is absent. Mind is enabled to do this only by the Chith which bridges the space. Similarly in all cases where mind is absorbed in things outside the physical range of the senses, the body is deserted for the moment. It is clear that the brain cells do not jump out to have a view of the remote subject. Something in the nature of an impulse, released by the stored up stress, having one end anchored in the brain matter and the other end at the subject visualised, will alone explain the phenomenon satisfactorily.

SECTION II.

NATURE OF THE CONTENTS OF THE MIND

The content of the mind is a constantly varying quantity, some receding into the background or even getting obliterated for all purposes for lack of interest in them, succeeded by others resulting from fresh experiences in life. From childhood to old age there is an ever changing panorama of incidents, reactions and imaginative play thereof.

The enriching of the store is due solely to the imaginative faculty which is creative in tendency. Perceptions and reactions alone do not suffice for the activity of the Mind. They but serve as material for further creative activity. It is the very essence of the mental faculty. Life would be very mechanical and insipid but for this faculty

called "Sankalpa" *i.e.*, imagination. It is what distinguishes the human species from the animal world. All the good things of the world are the results of imaginative effort of Mind which is its primary function. The reactions such as pain, pleasure, love, hate etc form part of the imaginative aspect of Mind and are hence its creations. Our life course is a constant effort at fulfilment of the imaginative creations of the Mind culminating in sense pleasures, which are the fruits of such efforts. The substance of the striving and yearning constituting our life purpose reduces itself to this; pleasures are imagined by the Mind and subsequently Mind imagines having realised these pleasures.

We shall now proceed to consider mental processes. In the first place, mind is not continuously in evidence even during the period of our wakefulness. It functions only spasmodically since it is not continuously absorbed in things. At frequent intervals the mind is disengaged, although we may not notice all such occasions. Even the mind of the busiest man on earth lapses back into such periods of repose frequently.

Leaving this moment of restfulness, consider the periods of activity alone. What are the things it can be busy about? There are only two fields of activity available, *viz.*, (1) The outer world which includes the physical body as well and (2) the inner world comprising only the images in the brain. Then our daily activity can be divided into 3 groups, *viz.*, (1) Routine duties connected with existence as eating,

drinking, bathing etc., (2) Duties connected with one's calling and (3) what remains over, which are one's leisure hours. The first two of these occupations have to deal with the external world, and all such acts are executed under only a partial direction of the mind. Because these acts are done day after day they become more or less automatic with only an occasional direction of the mind. Of course there are varying grades of people, from those who are wholly absorbed in such activities to those who go through them wholly mechanically. The mind is in any case not fully participating in these duties and often people think of other things or do other acts simultaneously. There is no thinking process involved, except when something out of the ordinary happens to the usual routine of duty. These acts are said to proceed from *vasanas* (i.e., long established habits. Such *vasanas*, as we have already mentioned, may have been acquired during one life cycle or during many such cycles. Some of the acts which we do instinctively can never be traced to the habits acquired during our present life cycle. However it is clear that our daily occupations coming under the first two categories proceed without much volition in a more or less mechanical sort of way, impelled by the stored up stresses.

Next we come to the third category comprising the leisure hours. The method of employing these leisure hours differentiate man from man fundamentally. It is in these hours that the mind, untrammelled by any sort of engrossing physical activity, is free to take stock and plan ahead. All

the creative work is done only during this period. We call this imagination. It is the fundamental feature of the Mind as we have already stated.

Most people employ their leisure hours only by obeying the impulses of the moment. From the vast storehouse of impressions gathered, impulses are shot out by mere association of ideas giving rise to indeterminate acts which constitute the extra-routine part of our lives. Most of us cannot say what we may do at any instant, that is, during the leisure hours. We say that it will depend on the mood of the moment. The sight or hearing of something might start some train of ideas which would determine what we do at the moment. Such is the life of most of us who are slaves to the impressions (or vasanas) and impulses.

If the leisure time be such that no physical act can be indulged in, then the mind falls into a reflective or imaginative mood. Imagination is planning for the future. New sense pleasures are sought after and ways and means of gratifying them are devised. In short, mind forges fresh fetters for itself. The stream of life is lengthened only in this manner. For, the creative work of the mind turns mainly on seeking fresh pleasures, constantly ruminating thereon, forming deep impressions thereof which impel one to fresh activity and so on.

Very rarely, indeed, do we come across those purposeful souls who always look ahead, fashion their lives according to some set plan and go through with it against

all odds. They are not moved by any bodily whim or fancy or the opinions of others. Impulses of the moment are brushed aside if they would interfere with their set plan. These are the successful people of the world on a large scale. They are the leaders of people. They are the sort who have a hold on their minds and use them as instruments.

So then we can broadly classify human beings into two categories *viz*, (1) those that are the slaves of the impulses proceeding from the stored up impressions and (2) those that have risen above such slavery. To the former belongs the large mass of mankind, while the latter at all ages are a mere handful. Of course, in between these two extreme grades, there is a considerable number of intermediate grades, having varying degrees of control over their impulses. It is clear then that it is the imaginative type that can be said to have risen above the animal stage and can be called men of action, whether accompanied by any concrete deeds or not. They are the people who make contributions to the world, whether for good or bad. They are visionaries, the inventors and leaders in every walk of life. They set the pace of the world. The rest of mankind is no more than a flock of sheep.

We shall now restate what mind is, so that we will be in a better position to deal with it. A movement or a stir arising in Consciousness creates at once the distinction of subject and object since any movement must terminate somewhere. The thing towards which the movement gravitates

is known as the object, which induces a state of perception through one of the senses at the other end, namely the subject. Then the subject enables awareness of the object by the reflection of the latter in Consciousness, thereby causing a perception. There is thus always a movement towards the object in the first place and then a movement from the object to the subject. This is constantly taking place in each one of us and it will be noticeable particularly with a new experience as on all other occasions we act on impulses arising from prior impressions. Mental movement is always from subject to object and not from object to subject. This fact has not been realised by most people, particularly not by scientists and not by many of the philosophers either, who therefore often come to wrong conclusions.

When any such experience is unaccompanied by the sense of "self" or a desire, then it constitutes a pure experience, without it leaving any trace of itself behind. This movement is fundamental and universal in character and in this state we call it "Chith". If on the other hand there is the least tinge of desire accompanying the experience then an impression is left behind. The movement suffers a distortion and is localised, losing its universal character. In this state we have what we call mind. All these tinged experiences are superposed on the fundamental movement and are stored up as vasanas, accounting for man's eventual behaviour and also for his successive life cycles. But Mind is not a mere assemblage of impressions and reactions only, as we have

already stated. These are but secondary effects, so to say. The primary movement of the Chith which is ever present as an undercurrent exhibits itself as imagination for which the stored up experiences constitute the material.

We shall now proceed to consider in the next chapter about various mental phenomena, about which people do not generally have very clear ideas. Consequently much mystery hangs about the processes of the mind. In fact many new sciences have sprung up under high sounding names which, while pretending to explain the phenomena, do no more than bewilder us.

CHAPTER IX.

DIVERSE STATES OF MIND

MEMORY

Let us consider foremost the state known as memory. From what we have said previously it is fairly obvious that desire or interest is the prime cause of a lasting impression. When an experience arises for the first time, the greater the interest shown or the desire attached to the particular perception the more carefully does one note all the details and the keener is the concentration on the object and the more vivid the image formed. Again, because of the very desire or interest the more frequently is the experience recalled the more indelibly is the impression recorded. This is the second factor contributing to memories of things *i. e.*, repeated experiences. A man may have good memory for the things he likes but a very bad memory for those in which he has no interest. While memory is the expression used to denote repeated experiences in a single life, experiences through centuries of evolutionary struggle are denoted by the word "Instinct". Instinct is also only a form of ineffaceable memory. When the repetition is so great and when it occurs through successive life cycles over several centuries, memory becomes transformed into instinct.

Geniuses, in particular fields of activity, are those who had engaged themselves in the same line of activity during

previous lives and devoted much thought and attention. They are therefore far above the others in those particular fields of activity. Geniuses are not made in one life cycle. Children of five or six years of age have been known to give solutions of mathematical problems in a trice what would call for some laborious calculation from others. Prodigies in various fields have been known at all ages and their extraordinary proficiency arises out of successive life experiences in the same field of activity.

Patanjali, in his Yoga-Sutras, says that memory is that modification of mind which arises from the indestructibility of prior experiences. This means that ideas are eternal and they do not die out, even though the person, in whom the ideas originated, may be burnt or buried since what was recorded in his mind subsists in the wider Consciousness also. Things that have been relegated to the back-doors of our memory or even scenes from our past lives flash back into our present-consciousness occasionally. This is possible only if our past experiences be registered outside our own selves too: Memory is therefore a mental modification and any such modification once suffered, is indelibly recorded in the brain, even though it may not be felt subsequently. When there is no longer any interest in particular experiences, they recede into the background but surely and certainly are carried forward to the succeeding lives. It is only on this basis that we can explain the presence of many of the animal instincts lying latent in us.

INTELLECT OR BUDDHI

This expression is often used as distinguished from Mind. Actually it is no more than a particular state of Mind. Mind is either engrossed in an object or is detached from it. Normally in this detached state, it is in repose or dissolved in Consciousness. But if an object, be it concrete or abstract, is to be examined dispassionately and critically the Mind detaches itself partially from the object and probes into it and arrives at a conclusion. In this state of detachment from objects Mind is known as Intellect. Anyhow it is one of the states of the Mind and no new entity is in evidence. It is neither the object nor is it Consciousness. It is the occasion when it shows its detachment from the object under consideration. It is just a reflection of Consciousness in this state.

JIVA, SOUL OR EGOISM

These are all synonymous expressions, all of them being in essence nothing but the Mind itself. They all indicate the individuality of a person and what is really more characteristic of a person than the composition of his Mind. It is this that is variously known as Jiva or Soul etc.

PRANA

This expression is used to convey varying meanings. Most frequently it is wrongly interpreted to mean the air that is breathed. There is no justification for this. In none

of the early authoritative writings, including the Yoga-Sutras of Patanjali, is the word prana used to convey any such meaning. Prana is to be identified with the subtle pulsation which induces nerve currents, resulting from incoming and outgoing tendency of the Mind and the practice of one form of Yoga consists in concentrating on such impulses. At other places prana is spoken of as identical with Chith.

Truly, however, prana is the fundamental vibration or impulse pervading everything *i. e.*, body as well as Mind including all other sentient and nonsentient things of the world. So prana manifests itself in both the subtle and gross states. In the subtle state it is known as Chith which acts as a carrier to all the various experiences as ideas gained during the life course and in conjunction with these it is known as Mind. In its gross state it permeates every particle of the body through the nervous system and keeps them all surging with life. All the bodily functions such as breathing, circulation of blood, evacuation, secretion of the glands and in fact the activity of the cells, are the result of this vitalising prana. Dead matter, though the components of the body are, they are enlivened and made to undergo changes by the energy imparted by Prana.

It is therefore the one Prana, universal in character, that manifests itself both in the subtle and gross states. In the former state it forms the basis for the mind and in the latter state as the activity of the physical body. Again the same Prana, pervading the body, is named differently in

the different parts of the body as Apana, Samana, Vyana and Udana.

The word prana is to be distinguished from Chith only in this way that while Chith represents the state of repose, Prana represents the dynamic aspect of Chith, which is the cause of creation and evolution. Sometimes the expression Chith itself is used in place of Prana and then its dynamic aspect is to be understood.

SUB-CONSCIOUS STATE

There is much mystery attached to this expression, out of ignorance. The truth is that the mind is actually a vast storehouse of experience gathered through successive life cycles and although these experiences of past lives cannot all be brought into Consciousness in the present life. Still under certain conditions and circumstances some of them flash across our mental horizon. These then appear to be strange phenomena. In any case it is these past experiences (vasanas) that account for the behaviour of a person in a manner that is foreign to his natural self. Unfulfilled longings and desires also break out of bounds sometimes and have been made much of by psychologists and psychoanalysts.

At the death of a person, the space charge permanently dissociates itself from the brain stuff and the body and gathering in itself all the essences of the person in the nature of his unfulfilled hopes, ambitions, inclinations and experiences remains pervading all space and when re-entering

a new body charges it so to say with all that it has come laden with. The new body then, *i. e.*, the brain cells, develop on the basis of this initial charge, which is brought into evidence in the behaviour of the person already at childhood, setting at nought the influences of parentage, training and environment. These are referred to as *vasanas* and they break into evidence as sub-conscious promptings.

Briefly then, anything that is brought into the Consciousness of a person, whether by reason of some associate ideas, by narcotics or by hypnosis is what has sometime or other been experienced by the person. Nothing can come out that has not already gone in. If any such things happen in a state of hypnosis, the mind, *i. e.*, the space charge of the person sets his organs in motion and he speaks out his thoughts without his being aware of it, because the brain cells are in a state of stupor and not in tune with the space charge. This is similar to the talk of a person strongly under the influence of drink who does not remember afterwards what he spoke or did. Even a man in extreme anger cannot recollect in his calmer moments all that he did or spoke in a temper.

SUPER CONSCIOUS STATE

Consciousness arises with reference to objects external or internal and abstract or concrete. Further it is the mind that becomes conscious of the objects. But there are only two states in which the Mind can exist in the waking state, *viz*, (1) the conscious state and (2) the non-conscious state.

In the former state the mind is one with the object and in the latter case it is in repose or dissolved. There is no other state possible. But the non-conscious state being objectless and therefore of highest peace may be called a super-conscious state.

Most people shun this state as of utter vacuity while wise men seek it. But it must be understood that there is no sort of awareness during this state. This can arise only after the state has passed. Hence the expression must be used with caution.

Generally however the super-Conscious state is understood to be that state, which is beyond the normally conscious state and in which things not ordinarily perceptible to the five senses are perceived. But this is nothing more than the state of the Mind which has detached itself from the promptings of its body and senses and remaining in a free and pure condition. By training, this state of Mind can be made very acutely receptive and responsive. In any case it is again the Mind that is in evidence and not any other being.

Telepathy, clairvoyance, clair-audience and foreknowledge, all come under this phenomenon. But it is wrong to classify them as states beyond Consciousness, since without the functioning of the mind, ideas of other minds cannot become apparent and without the senses being *alive events happening somewhere cannot be sensed*. When the mind and the senses are in operation, we cannot call it

a state outside Consciousness. We shall now consider in detail these various phenomena.

THINKING PROCESS

To understand this phenomenon we must know what the mechanism of the thinking process is and what the ideas arising therefrom signify. In the first place, all mental processes take place with the aid of the fundamental and universal movement or pulse, which is referred to as Chith or Prana in Sanskrit Philosophical literature. This pulse forms the basis for thoughts or ideas in the subtle plane and at the same time it courses through the nervous system inducing activity in every cell of the body. This pulse then acts as a carrier to every idea on the mental or subtle plane to every living creature on earth and without it serving as a basis ideas cannot take their rise. These pulses can be likened to electro-magnetic wave trains, on which are superposed audio-frequency wave trains in radio transmission, which establish a connection between a radio transmitting station and a receiving set. The latter responds or receives the messages only when it is tuned to the frequency of the transmitting station otherwise not, although the messages may be radiating in all directions.

In like manner, ideas formed in the brain pulsate and set up vibrations in space. These vibrations, which are far subtler than even cosmic rays, also radiate in all directions but they can be picked up only by equally subtle receiving instruments. The brain is both the transmitting and receiving

station. The vibrations set up by thinking pass through the spinal cord, then through the entire nervous system on to the outer skin and then along the hairs into space. But one characteristic feature of these vibrations, as distinguished from electromagnetic vibrations, is that their strength is undiminished whatever the distance traversed, since they have not to contend with inertia characteristic of the material plane.

IDEAS AND OBJECTS

So every idea represents some object which is expressible in some language or sound vibrations. For instance, if a car accident were witnessed by a number of people speaking different languages, more or less the same messages are received by the brains of all the onlookers. But when they have to narrate the incident subsequently to others, everyone does so in a different language. So far as the impressions in the brain matter are concerned, they are all identical so that if the ideas are directly transmitted, without the use of the sense organs (here the vocal organ) language difference is no bar to mutual understanding. In brief while objects are in the form of ideas language question does not arise but when the objects are to be expressed in words, it can be done in a variety of languages or sound combinations.

Now there are two ways in which the ideas, representing objects, can be transmitted from one person to another, viz., (i) directly from brain to brain as in radio transmission, (ii) indirectly through the sense organs, of which the most

important is the vocal organ. In general however the second method is the one mostly in vogue. The first method is available only to the gifted few.

We have seen in Chapter 3, section 2, that objects as such do not exist. They are no more than the earliest ideas of the Cosmic imaginative activity which arose spontaneously. These ideas, when continually brooded upon, congealed, so to say, to yield form and substance when viewed through the sense organs, which come about in like manner. The point is that objects existed in the universe already before the evolving creatures developed organs of perception. And these objects could not have been in the state in which we cognise them now. For Nature is not a person and it has no organs of perception. Hence, objects must have existed only as Cosmic ideas.

The evolving creatures developed organs of perception in the urge to know the external world or in other words to seek the "self" outside themselves. Thus the objects of the external world appeared as the organs interpreted them. These objects became subordinate to the limitations of the sense organs, which came into existence out of the imaginative activity of the creatures themselves. Thus an object is no more than an idea of a Cosmic idea. The form and substance do not exist, as more fully explained in Chapter XIV.

Every object is experienced by us in a three fold manner namely, (1) as an idea of the mind, (2) as having form and substance as revealed by the sense organs and (3) as a word

or sound vibration. The first two remain as one's own personal experiences and only in the third form is the experience freely communicable and shared by others to varying extent according to individual mental make up.

With these preliminary explanations, we may proceed to consider other mental states.

TELEPATHY

This is a state whereby ideas or thoughts arising in one mind are revealed to another person's mind, however remotely separated they are from each other. The explanation to this phenomenon is simple in the light of what we have already stated about the nature of ideas and how they are all the time radiated in space. The minds of the two participants are tuned to each other, so that thoughts, as they arise in the one, are registered in the other mind. Most people cannot tune themselves to other minds, out of a preponderating sense of egoism which characterise them. In fact we generally try to be out of tune as much as possible, in order to emphasise our own individuality. This characteristic or failing extends even up to nations, resulting in mutual discord, wars and unending conferences without positive results. But some people, exceedingly few of course, can always appreciate the other man's view point. They try to tune themselves to other minds. They are not thought readers but they get some general ideas of the workings of other minds. Deliberate and persistent effort in this direction will give surprising results. Then there

are others, rarer than the former class, who are born with the gift of tuning themselves at will to other minds. Such a gift is no doubt a result of efforts in previous lives. It is these people who are able to pick up messages from other minds, by virtue of their ability to tune themselves to other minds at will. The transmission of the messages takes place from mind to mind directly.

Of course such messages are brought to our Consciousness through the sense organs after passing through the nervous system. But the sense organs are all designed to deal with much lower frequency pulses, of which light exciting the eyes is the highest. The transformation of the extremely high frequency pulses in the shape of ideas into the low frequency pulses in the shape of sense perceptions is effected by the brain. A similar phenomenon is observed in radio transmission where the voice frequency is transformed into the high frequency electro magnetic waves which is again retransformed into the voice frequency at the receiving end.

From the foregoing it will be clear that for telepathic communication the mind and the senses are both called into operation and so it is as much a conscious state as any of our normal mind operations. The expression "superconscious" is therefore singularly inappropriate and positively misleading.

Such transmission will no doubt be rendered easier so as to come within the possibility of communication of

those not gifted with special powers, if the persons concerned practice tuning themselves at stated times by pre-arrangement. Assiduous practice combined with faith and zeal will lead to the acquisition of such powers. Those who are born with such gifts must be presumed to have practised this in their previous life or lives. Nothing can be achieved without prior effort

CLAIRVOYANCE, CLAIRAUDIENCE ETC.

These are not any new powers or states of Mind. The explanations in connection with telepathy should suffice to explain these phenomena as well. The messages received by the mind in telepathic communication when decoded through the senses of sight or hearing give rise to the states mentioned. They are thus dependent on telepathic communication and are not independent states. All messages picked up by the mind have necessarily to be transformed through one of the five senses before we become aware of them.

It is to be remembered that we are, so to say, immersed in an ocean of vibrations or pulses of various frequencies ranging from the lowest to the highest. They react on the bodily system with which they have an affinity. But these are not the only influences to which we are constantly exposed. There are other vibrations or pulses of a subtler nature, in the shape of thoughts and ideas of men, which float about in space and which are picked up when our minds are accidentally tuned to them. This is how

sometimes some unusual ideas flash across our mental horizon, ideas about which we may not even have thought about consciously.

IDEAS OF PAST AND FUTURE

We have already established in Chapter VII that there is nothing like a time flow really and that the seeming flow is due to the comparative sluggishness of the brain. With reference to a mind which functions in flashes of exceedingly short durations, we can only reasonably speak of a succession of events pertaining to each individual separately. The reason for this is that the true measure of time, or pace of life of no two individuals is the same. The standard of measure for each one is different; as we have already stated.

Then we have to consider that the nature of the mind is such that it can respond only to present events; it cannot directly perceive or cognise either the past or the future. But so far as the past is concerned, they exist both as space vibrations and as records in our brain and so the mind is able to have recurring present experiences of past events. And so, if the mind is to have a present experience of what we call a future event, it must also exist now as a space vibration or as the actual experience of another person or set of persons. How this is possible will be presently explained.

The experiences of each person are not of a single life but of a succession of lives, may be 100, 200 or more and

of many others they may be as low as 20 or 30 lives. In other words, some of us may be 5000 or 10000 years old, while others as young as 1000 years or less, since we have all commenced our life cycles at varying times, although we appear to be contemporaries in the present life cycle. On this basis, it will be no surprise if we find some to be overflowing with wisdom, while the large masses are wallowing in varying grades of ignorance. Wisdom, it must be noted, is born only out of experience and such superior wisdom, as we do notice here and there could have been gathered only in the course of many many lives. Thus from the foregoing it should be clear that what is future for many may be the present or past for others measured in terms of a succession of events of a number of people. What I may have to live through 10 years hence may therefore flash into another man's Consciousness now or may have been his past experience. Some of us are misfits in our own age as we are hundreds of years ahead of the rest of the world. Past, present and future then are all different for all of us, which we ordinarily do not realise or do not take notice of. In any case, unless the future events in the lives of some people already exist now potentially as vibrations in space, it will not be possible to foretell any future event.

We have next to consider another curious fact which most of us do not realise. Our hopes and ambitions and our desires are mentally accomplished in a trice, in fact as soon as conceived. It is the end result that we always dream about, not so much the thorny path we may have to tread

in the accomplishment. But the actualising of what has been mentally accomplished into its counterpart in the physical or gross plane takes varying times, may be days, years or even several life spans. Many of our present day achievements such as aerial flight, rains of fire and so forth had been accomplished in mental fancies 3000 years or more back. If they had not been dreamt about, we could not have achieved what we have to day. What has happened and what is forever happening to everyone of us is that, what lies at first outside the range of the five senses is gradually unfolded to us after varying intervals of time. If a young man at twenty dreams of fame and fortune and he achieves this at the end of 30 years of hard struggle, then this long interval of time is only a slow motion series of events of what had been mentally accomplished repeatedly in fancy in the early youth and even subsequently. Our life course is in fact a series of strivings at the realisation of a number of desires, of which some may be the ruling ones, while others are passing fancies. The ruling passions mark out the individual. All these desires are already achieved mentally but the translation of these results, from the subtle or mental plane into what we call concrete or substantial events in the gross plane, requires varying time intervals to overcome the inherent inertia of a number of obstacles in the material plane. Thus the future event is already pulsating now and is not taking place for the first time at the future date, when it is revealed to our senses.

It is well to bear in mind, in this context that a course of events of 50 or 100 years duration could be mentally accomplished or gone through in an exceedingly short time.

This is what takes place in our dreams or fancies. No-body has as yet found a measure to determine the rate of working of the mind. The measures of time for events in the mental world, in the world of the atoms and the world of our sense perceptions are so entirely different from one another that we cannot judge or speak about them in any common measure of time.

Bearing then in mind the facts of our experience, that some future events are truly predicted, we have also to grant that the future event with all the attendant circumstances such as the scene of the event, the persons participating and other incidentals has already been enacted in the mental plane long before it is actually unfolded to our crude senses in the physical. Except on this basis, we cannot explain how an event to come ten years hence can flash into present consciousness with all the details.

Of course such prediction is possible only by some people, who, either by practice, or having obtained as an inborn gift arising from practice in previous lives, are in a position to tune their minds to others. Few indeed are endowed with such a gift.

Any future event, be it in the life of a person or in Nature, is the result of what has taken place before that instant in relation to that event. No present or future event in the world, whatever its nature or whatsoever it relates to, is an isolated one; it is only the culmination of a series of prior happenings which lead to it. In other words, all

events in the phenomenal world are subject to cause-effect relationship as has been already established and they can happen only in one way. It is meaningless to say that, had circumstances been different, the result too would have been different, since circumstances can never be different

DREAM

This state marks the gradual change from waking to sleep, again from sleep to waking, exactly identical with what takes place in Nature. The dawn preceeds the rising of the sun and dusk ushers in the Night. The fatigued brain cells in this state are not fully responsive. They are still feebly active since they have not reached a state of complete rest. The five senses are therefore rendered inoperative and the external world is shut out. Owing to the greater inertia of the brain cells in this condition, the images released are not in tune with the space charge excitations. Hence the experiences appear to be incongruous and grotesque. Moreover, time, space and causation, which are associated with the sense organs, are no longer operative. Hence the phenomena occurring in dreams, based no doubt on past waking experiences, do not obey the laws of cause and effect, nor do they conform to time-space considerations. The experiences of a life time may occur in a few moments or the experience of a moment may be drawn out to a life period. The scene of the episode may be shifted to some remote corner of the Earth or Heavens. The images, in this condition, are excited only by the internal processes of the body, for there is nothing else that can furnish the stimulus

to excite the feebly active brain cells. In this state may be experienced within the body all the wild aspects of external Nature such as mighty torrents of water, raging volcanic fire, earthquakes or tornados and so forth. The internal processes of the body are magnified to seem like these external phenomena. After all they are like phenomena only differing in magnitude. This is like comparing events in atomic scale with events of the gross perceptible world. The events are truly of like magnitude in their respective spheres.

But nothing occurs in dreams that has not been experienced by the subject some time or other. The experience might even be of past lives. The subject of dream must therefore be necessarily based on waking experiences. Briefly speaking, vasantas determine not only the behaviour of a person in waking but also the content of the dream phenomena. The only difference between the two states is that imaginative activity is inoperative in the dream state for the brain cells are not fully responsive. Imaginative activity is, however, dreaming in the waking state. In this case too, time space considerations are ignored by the Mind. And a man's fancy can be as grotesque as any that may appear in dreams.

Again in the dream state, the mind is not subject to the scrutiny of the external world and so what may not be made known to the outside world consciously by the person may be brought out in dream consciousness and given expression

to, since the brain cells are then unaware of what is happening.

MYSTIC EXPERIENCES

We have yet to consider another aspect of mind phenomenon when it obtains what is known as "Direct Experiences". This experience is said to exclude the distorting effect of the imperfect senses with limited faculties and so the experiences so obtained are said to be revelations or truths. We have already discussed this subject under the heading "Telepathy and Fore-knowledge", from which it is clear that the subject under discussion is identical with picking up the ideas floating about in the space around us. The mystic is temporarily out of contact with the body and sense organs and is living in the world of ideas. This state is not different from one of deep thinking or living in the world of imagination.

Let us now consider what a direct experience means. Experience arises only when there is subject-object relationship and the identification of the two amounts to an experience. Now in the direct experience of a mystic or like persons, the subject is the mind of the experiencer and the object the ideas floating about, be they one's own prior ideas or the ideas of others. When the mind picks up these floating ideas and becomes one with them, so called mystic experience arises. Since they arise only when the mind is in a state of quiescence, these unexpected ideas that are picked up are taken as revelations.

But they are not really strange ones and cannot be. For the mind can respond only to such ideas for which it is tuned, so to say. The person must have previously pursued the same line of thought or enquiry very often without arriving at any conclusive answers. Then suddenly one day the unexpected happens and the long awaited answer flashes into Consciousness as a revelation. Such an experience is in essence not different from what usually happens to most thinking individuals when they wrestle with problems of various kinds. The solution to the problem flashes into Consciousness most unexpectedly, as we have elsewhere stated, so as to amount to a revelation.

What the person then really experiences is either the outcome of his own line of enquiry and the longed-for experience or identical ideas arising from others who have pursued the same line of enquiry and arrived at certain results. To put it rather pointedly and in all its naked truth, the mystic experiences are no more than one's own longings and desires. And so it has no greater claim to represent the Ultimate Truth than any other experience of anybody else. It must be realised forcibly that every experience is only a subsequent realisation of what has previously been imagined or longed for.

This is the proper place to mention that no one's experience, however great and intelligent and all-knowing he may be, is any good to anybody else, however low or unintelligent the latter may be. Every entity must progress out of its own efforts and experiences. If there is anything in this universe that stands out most prominently, it is this

fundamental fact. Unfortunately in the history of the Universe there have been extremely few individuals that had realised this basic truth

DEEP SLEEP

Sleep marks the condition in which the brain cells are at complete rest and hence inoperative so far as the external world is concerned. The sense organs have been rendered ineffective earlier *i.e.*, during dream state and thus the outside world has ceased to exist. The mind exists in its natural state as space charge, and in an unmanifested condition since there is no interaction between the Mind and the now dormant brain. The instrument of manifestation *i.e.*, the body is unable to keep step with it all the time. The Mind therefore gives the body the much needed rest, to be able to use it better after the latter is refreshed.

It is then wrong to say that Mind does not exist in sleep. It cannot suddenly vanish and then reappear in the morning. The inert physical body is just allowed to regain its natural state of slumber, like the rest of the inanimate world, but for a short time only and then it is called to duty. Until then the Mind is in a potential state. It has regained its universal state for the time being.

It is in this state that all ideas and impressions formed during the day arrange themselves and settle down so as to give a proper orientation to their subsequent manifestation. It is the experience of everyone that problems remaining unsolved during the day and taken to the bed are often

solved overnight or after several nights. The brain cells are dormant and so they are not called into play during this process. The space charge acts like an electronic brain and brings out the solution as was stated earlier. It is therefore wrong to say that mind does not exist in Sleep. On the other hand this fact proves conclusively that mind exists simultaneously in the subtle state, besides remaining as stored impressions in the brain.

But while mind is out of contact with the body and does not interact with it, life process continues. Nature carries on the functions of the bodily organisms undisturbed by the interferences of the mind. The restless mind, in the fulfillment of its desires, subjects the bodily organs and organisms to severe stresses during the waking hours. During sleep recuperation takes place. The mind, untrammelled by the body, is clear and is able to work out the solutions for the problems taken to the bed.

The state of sleep can however also be enjoyed in the waking state, although realised as such only by a few, as when the mind does not react to any kind of perception either external or internal. This state is known as the highest samadhi or nir-Vikalpa Samadhi. Sleep is after all only a state in which the mind is dissociated from the external world and the internal world of stored impressions and these conditions are fulfilled in the state mentioned above. Such a state is actually experienced by every one many times a day, although they are all of extremely short durations. In the intervals between two thoughts we are in

such a state. But the really wise and great men enjoy it as an abiding state, as they do not react to anything

There is however a great difference between ordinary sleep and sleep in waking, in that, in the latter state, even imaginative activity is suspended as is more fully explained under "Samadhi" in Chapter XI. Thus it is a superior kind of sleep to ordinary sleep. In ordinary sleep imaginative activity has free scope, and is untrammelled by the distracting senses. People generally believe that imaginative activity is possible only in the waking state and this is wrong. For, when imagination is active, the mind is totally dissociated from the external and internal worlds and so this can only be called a state of sleep, since body-consciousness is absent. There is however one disadvantage in pursuing imaginative activity amidst waking hours arising from frequent interruption by way of recurring body-consciousness. In the state of sleep, mind is free from such distracting phenomena and it can indulge in its fancies uninterruptedly.

To be quite certain that imaginative activity is pursued in sleep only, it is enough if we examine the condition of mind in the other two states *i.e.*, dream and waking. In the dream state mind is occupied only with the stored impressions in the brain and in the waking state the mind is in a state of perception or reaction or in the act of translating ideas into actions. Thus in these two states creative activity is not possible since mind is occupied with other kinds of activities. Thus imaginative activity is possible

only in the state of real sleep or sleep in waking. The other two states furnish only the material for new ideas to be evolved or created in the third state.

Considering again the entire course of evolution, which brought into being countless substances and creatures from previous state of non-existence by the ever increasing imaginative activity, it is clear that all such activity could have taken place only in Space or in the womb of the Cosmic Being and outside the brains or nucleus of the creatures themselves. For, what is new is foreign to the creatures, although subsequently the new ideas are impressed on their brains.

DEATH

Exactly identical is the state immediately after death. Mind continues to exist as hitherto, only that it has detached itself completely from the body, as it no longer answers its needs and it seeks a fresh body to work out its hopes and ambitions. In this state no fresh experiences are added to what has been gathered so far nor any wiped out. It just conserves the experiences gathered up to then.

Inanimate matter has no tendency to grow by itself. But the same inanimate matter forming the physical framework of plants, animals and human beings shows marvellous properties of growth in an illimitable variety of ways when suffused with life or mind essence or the dynamic aspect of Intelligence. But this growth lasts only for a time

and then there is a gradual decay. New bodies are acquired for the continuation of life activity. The physical body is unable to keep step with the needs of the Mind and is therefore discarded.

Sleep and Death are then identical states and the only difference lies in that the former state is followed by wakefulness in a body more or less identical with what preceded it, whereas the latter is followed by a fresh body.

There is nothing in the world more mysterious than Death, nothing so dreaded by both man and beast, nor anything so grossly misunderstood as death. The horror connected with it is accentuated by the large number of gruesome and revolting ways in which it often happens such as a fall from great heights, or being stabbed or cut to pieces, or crushed by a large weight and so forth. They shock our sensibilities and are cruel to look at. But how comparatively rare such forms of Death are than the more usual ones namely due to diseases or a gradual decline in vitality. Few realise however that the unusual forms of death mentioned may often be more welcome than the slow, painful and lingering death which is more common. We do not know if in many of these cases the person has not died out of shock before the body is mutilated, presenting a gruesome sight to the onlookers. Anyhow, if these comparatively rarer forms of death are ignored there is nothing in it to induce dread.

If on the other hand we consider the more common forms by the gradual decline of the physical and mental powers or the equally common spectacle of disease and living death, no sensible person would wish to continue existence. The helplessness and the dependence on others is more killing than death itself. What is the purpose of an existence of this nature?

Let us consider how death is brought about. All the varieties of ways by which it is brought about are mere excuses for the termination of the life process. There is no apparent reason why each one should die at a different period of life. Nor can we presume an external agent encompassing the death of the individual. Death can only mean a termination to the temporary life cycle, since the existing circumstances and conditions are unfit for the continuation of the life process. Death can be brought about only by one's own unconscious longings and desires. Many of the aspirations remain unfulfilled, although some obtain fruition. But the law of life is that no intense desire can remain unfulfilled. Hence if our aspirations and ambitions cannot be realised under the existing conditions and environment, then new conditions have to be obtained. This is provided by death. New body and environment offer better scope for the realisation of desires not fructified. Nothing solves human problems more effectively than death, although for the time being it may appear calamitous. In all this talk, we are concerned only with the individual afflicted and not with the dependants to whom the occurrence may bring suffering. But it is just their luck.

Does anyone worry about going to sleep. Everyone really welcomes it. Many are worried that they are unable to get proper sleep. Sleep is so refreshing and gives such renewed vigour to face the next day's problems, that everyone welcomes it. After the embraces of one's beloved, the inclination of everyone is to slip into the even more beloved unconsciousness of sleep to complete the day's happiness, as it were. The state of death is not far different from sleep, in its effects on the individual. All the present insoluble problems are solved effectively and the person is placed in more favourable circumstances to realise his unfulfilled hopes and longings with a new body.

Death is therefore not a thing to be dreaded. It does not mean however that it should be welcomed. It will not come at one's sweet will. It comes in its own time and when it comes, it is the right time for every individual for it comes in fulfilment of his own desires.

AFTER DEATH EXPERIENCES

There are a variety of opinions prevalent regarding the condition of the "Mind" or "Jiva" after death and also as to how long it exists in that state. A large section of people holds that it has an ethereal body and that in that state it can communicate its wishes to the living and influence their lives generally to their good. Some scientists have supported this view and they have laid down their experiences with such spirits. Behind these statements lies the conception of a "Mind" having all the capacity of the

living and devoid only of substance. It is rather strange that scientists too have fallen into this self deception. Their intense faith in the existence of a spirit world has clouded their minds to such an extent that they have failed to recognise the projection of their own minds in the so called spirits which they think they have sensed. This is in the same category as the visions of Gods and Goddesses which some visionaries are said to have seen. The above conception has no foundation in fact.

Mind, as we have already explained, can only be conceived of as stress or potential and hence incapable of functioning without a medium in the shape of a physical body. This is exactly identical with the case of a current of electricity. The presence of a difference of potential is alone not sufficient to induce a current flow. A connecting medium is required, then alone can electricity function; similarly the disembodied Jiva or Mind cannot function in any manner until it takes a fresh body. Again light, for instance, cannot be perceived unless it falls on some object. Similarly even the presence of the mind cannot be established except in the presence of the body. Much less then can there be any experience when the mind is dissociated from the body, for experience requires the presence of both the subject and the object. The mind or the body cannot experience anything singly.

Our ancient literature abounds in statements to the effect that experiences of the joys of Heaven or the

tortures of Hell are undergone in the state after Death. No doubt the intense faith of people in such beliefs cannot pass off without being actually experienced. But all this must occur before death and not after. They certainly cannot also be experienced in the waking or conscious state as the beliefs are not based on actual reality but are just unverified creeds. They can only be experienced as dreams. This is how a person can undergo the punishment or obtain the rewards resulting from his deeds and faiths, namely, as dream phenomena before death.

The mind after death cannot be in any other condition than what it is during sleep. It is in a potential or unmanifested condition. If mind does not manifest itself in the presence of a physical body as at sleep, much less can it manifest itself in the absence of a physical body after death. It exists then just as a stress in space. In this condition it is, as it were, omnipresent and capable of manifesting itself anywhere *i.e.*, for taking on a fresh body.

The next question is, how long it remains in this unmanifested state before it takes a fresh body. To answer this question we may consider what takes place in the inanimate world. We know that the atoms that make up the substance are incessantly active but always of the same variety. In the transition from inanimate to animate existence and forms nothing happened, no external force has intervened to arrest this activity. Activity must still be continuous. The only change of a fundamental nature that

we witness in this transition is that the activity is of an increasingly diversified nature as we ascend the scale of evolution. But there is no break to the activity at any time.

On this basis then death cannot be a termination of the life process but only an indication of a fresh birth. Death and rebirth must be simultaneous if there should be no break to the continuity of activity. This question has been discussed in detail in the author's booklet on "Population Control-How?" The statement made above finds support in various authoratative works such as (1) Brhadaranyako Upanishad where it is stated that the Soul fastens one leg to a new body before it deserts the old one, like a worm that crawls from one leaf to another; (2) Mahabharata; (3) Nadi Grantha of Kaka Bhujander and (4) in the numerous stories of Kathasarithsagara.

LIFE AND MIND

This leads us to consider the problem whether the embryo in the womb has life or not. Here we have to go deeper into the differences between Chith, which in popular language is called life and Mind. We have already stated that Chith is the universal movement which pulsates in every species of being and forms the basis for the evolution of one species after another. It operates through the instincts of its creatures, one of which is self-preservation and the other is the reproductive urge. Both these urges are universal. By these means every species is preserved as long as it lasts by adapting itself to changing environment and circumstan-

ces. The wastage that arises by death is made up for by replacements of freshly born ones. Thus Chith or life stream can bring about only new bodies or new habitats for those that die. It cannot be made instrumental for the individual characteristics of beings as Chith itself is neutral and has no bias. Such individual characteristics are acquired by each being during successive lives. We must necessarily conclude then that the embryo in the womb of every species or the egg has only "life" *i.e.*, the characteristic of the race or species-instinct to persist but not Mind.

The embryo is not an entity with any individual characteristic, for it has no mind. In our body the various organs and organisms are not permeated by the mind. They are energised and roused to activity by Chith, which is at the same time the basis for the mind phenomenon. Mind does no doubt influence the bodily organisms through the nervous system but it has no abode in them, to make us believe that all organisms as blood, Semen etc. are surcharged with the mental characteristics of each individual and so transmitted to the offspring. The offspring then have no means of imbibing the traits of the parents. At the same time we do see children having inherited the traits from the one or the other parent or even from both. This is explained by the fact that the soul seeking a body senses the proper environment congenial to it and this is oftentimes furnished by a couple having more or less a like nature.

Another objection against presuming that birth of an individual takes place in the womb is that this imposes a

temporary inactivity to the soul while it is in the womb since there can be no self-expression in that condition. Nor can we say that the soul is aiding the growth of the embryo, since this is beyond its capacity. Nature alone can carry it out.

Thus the embryo is no more than a composite living organism having the characteristic of growth in common with plants. At any rate it has no individuality.

As soon as the embryo comes out of the womb or the shell in the case of an egg, it is charged, so to say, by an entity which discards one body and is in need of another. We have already stated that Mind exists as a space charge also and so the moment it scents a new body for itself it leaves the body which no longer serves its purpose. Thus death and rebirth are simultaneous phenomena as already stated.

There are several reasons to lead us to believe that the entity which discards a body at death re-enters another body when one such is ushered, as at birth rather than by any other process. It would be simpler, for this purpose, to examine the other possible means by which rebirth is possible. The most common and widespread belief is that conception takes place at the time of the union of the male and the female. It is however generally known that out of an innumerable number of unions only a small percentage, varying probably between one to two, is really fruitful of results. It is all a hit and miss affair. Birth and death are

however such planned events that they cannot be looked upon as chance phenomena. Secondly, the union of the male and female is often unpremeditated and is indulged in by way of sport and not with any deliberate intent. Conception, when it does result, is then a pure accident so far as the parents are concerned. A dynamic entity such as a soul cannot be the outcome of such an accident and ebullition of spirits of the parents. The parents at the moment are unaware of their own selves. Hence the above view has to be ruled out.

The biologists say that the genes of the chromosomes of the ovary and the spermatazoa are responsible for transmitting the parents' characteristics to the offspring. This could be admitted if the children do invariably inherit the characteristics of the parents. But the exceptions of not inheriting them are so large that the hypothesis has to be discarded. Geniuses are not born of parents who can lay the least claim to genius. Great men beget worthless offspring. Worthless parents beget great souls. Such instances are far too numerous to let us accept the biologist's theory. We can however accept that the genes of the chromosomes reproduce the particular species. That these lowly forms of life can be thought to be endowed with mental qualities of the parents, which they can transmit to the offspring, is simply incredible. What the chromosomes do is to build up the body of the species to which it belongs. So this hypothesis cannot also be accepted.

Birth cannot be accounted for by any other means or process. The theory advanced by us is the only one that will stand scrutiny. In the first chapter we alluded to the larger or universal movement and the microcosmic or individual movements. The larger movement or the creative urge is responsible for producing species after species of animate life in the process of evolution, making use of the instincts of the species and manufacturing habitats for the tired and weary pilgrims on the long march of Life.

A fact of great significance is that every series of events in the universe about us happens at certain regular intervals. Nothing happens in a haphazard manner. The motions of the planets of the solar system or the growth and the flowering of the plants, or the reproductive urge of the animals, all occur in certain well defined periods and not at random. Or in other words every species of being responds to certain rhythmic pulses and most of the important events connected with its existence synchronise with these periods. For instance, in the case of the human span of life, birth, growing into boyhood, vigorous youth, marriage, begetting children, old age, death, are all important events and these must depend on certain rhythmic pulses for each species of being, to each of which a section of the species responds. Phenomena occurring simultaneously in various parts of the earth, simultaneous births, deaths or susceptibility to certain epidemics are all due to responses to such specific pulses.

CHAPTER X.

MIND AND SOME MODERN VIEWS ABOUT IT

Although we have dealt with all aspects of the mind fairly exhaustively, still we have to examine one set of views emanating from scientists who have developed the latest scientific marvel, the "Electronic Brain". What is claimed for it is that it displays goal-directed activity by making use of the processes of thinking and learning, in exactly the same way as the human brain. More, they point out, cannot be claimed for the human brain. What the function of a machine is to its structure, mind is to the body. Thus body and mind are identical and not two different principles and if they were so they cannot interact. But such interaction is a matter of everyone's experience. This, in brief, is what they say. There are a number of modified views also, but it is unnecessary to deal with everyone of them since by discussing the extreme view we would be answering all other variants too.

Before discussing the subject proper, let us consider an illustration given by the sage Vasishta to explain to Rama the nature of the mind. The sage said that the monkeys of a forest, having once experienced a forest fire, retained the impression of the red colour of the flames and the warmth that they shed. Then when the cold winter came, they collected together, in a big heap, some red seeds, available plentifully in the forest, which have the colour of

the flames and sat around it and comforted themselves by enjoying the warmth. This illustration very aptly describes the mind of the cyberneticians.

To revert to the subject, the electronic brain is not an independant being just as a horse or a dog is. If all the component parts are laid aside they would not combine by themselves to make up the goal directed machine whereas every living creature has its own goals. The electronic brain has no goal of its own ; the goals are those of the designers and builders. It is a product of the human brain and so has been evolved on the pattern of behaviour of the human brain ; it is a working model of the brain and nervous system. We cannot turn round now and say that the human mind is like the electronic brain which will be like the illustration of the monkey's behaviour. We can only say that the electronic brain behaves like a human brain.

This is the occasion to ponder over another delusion that we all suffer from. We do not know how we (*i.e.*, human beings) came into this world, what for and so forth. Some Being ushered us into this world which we forget. We consider ourselves to be continually conquering Nature so that one day we can ourselves manufacture living entities in the test tube or in the factory. This would be just like the electronic brain trying to do away with the inventors and the builders and declaring its independant existence.

To proceed, the electronic brain achieves the goals set by the inventors even more precisely and unfailingly than

the human brain can. But it cannot change its goals as the human brain can and does. Even when the goal is no longer desirable, the electronic brain cannot be dissuaded from thrusting the unwanted thing into our hands. Then the goals set by the human brain have emotional satisfaction as their only aim. But the electronic brain is devoid of any emotion and is only capable of executing a set of pre-arranged motions without any purpose of its own. Both the preset goals and the satisfactions derived are of the designers. On the other hand all human activity is subordinated to the satisfaction of the emotions and if such emotional satisfactions are not obtained the activity may be given up at any stage, as of no worth.

No doubt the mechanical processes of the electronic brain are a copy of the functioning process of the human brain and the nervous system. Beyond that, the electronic brain would execute its movements precisely and unfalteringly, undeflected by any emotional disturbances such as the human mind is accustomed to. In this way it is even more perfect than the human mind which always rebels at drudgery and seeks novelty and change frequently.

The reason for this kind of behaviour of the human mind is that it represents a combination of the states of freedom and bondage. In its free state it indulges in imaginative activity and in translating that into physical activity it partakes of the nature of inanimate matter. The imaginative activity of the mind which plays the role of the designer

of the electronic brain, imparts the ideas to the brain which thereafter executes the behests of the mind accordingly. The brain and the nervous system form the complex mechanism like the electronic brain. The human brain does no more think than the electronic brain. It is the mind that thinks and the brain is only its slave. The brain cannot be identified with the mind. Mind is a subtle activity, since imaginative activity enters into its composition, but when the subtle activity is to be translated into a gross one on the physical plane, the mind identifies itself with the brain and behaves in a mechanical manner. Thus the working of the electronic brain can be compared to the human *brain* but not to the human mind. The brain is to the mind what the electronic brain is to the designer. The brain stores up the ideas originating from imaginative activity and subsequently releases these impulses to set the body into activity for the actualisation of the ideas. Thus the brain is no more than a store-house of ideas of one's own imagination and experience. In any case it is not the source of ideas nor does it create ideas. Imaginative activity takes place in the womb of the Cosmic Being. The human mind is possessed of a large measure of imagination whereas the electronic-brain is only a copy or shadow of a particular aspect of the inventor's brain.

CHAPTER XI.

INTERACTION OF MINDS

Till now we have considered the nature and functioning of mind in individual persons. Let us now consider briefly how the minds of different individuals interact and how the minds of a society or a nation find expression in actual practice. What is stated here may be applied to any section of society or may embrace the whole human species, so far as any particular idea concerned is found any where.

Among the individuals composing such a group, society or a nation, there are always many having identity of views on each and every individual matter bearing on the problems of life of the community. In this way we can arrive at differing groups of people, subject-war analysed. We have already said that all ideas reside, not only as images in the brain of the individual and as external objects but also as pulsations in Space. And so when many people have the same idea on any matter and all these pulsate identically in Space, they must weld together into a strong and forceful pulsation, just as many small waves of the same wave length or frequency fuse to form a big wave.

We can here consider an illustration from natural phenomena. The waters in the seas, rivers, soil and plants slowly evaporate and ascend invisibly into the skies. There they slowly collect together to form at first small clouds and gradually into ever larger rain bearing clouds at some distant place. Then comes an opportune wind and the clouds can

so also a certain amount of violence is always present, which can by no means be avoided, when ideas are allowed to accumulate in intensity without finding a path of discharge. We can now proceed to consider the functioning of group minds in the light of these facts.

Before we do so let us consider briefly what conditions are necessary for ideas to be translated into objects and concrete acts. Let us confine ourselves to the ideas of the human mind, for we already know something about the Cosmic Mind and how many millions of years it took to fabricate the human body. Scientists estimate this period at about 2500 million years. The Cosmic mind had to contend with tremendous odds. It brought out the material world at first and from these unthinking masses of material to create living forms was no easy matter. Step by step it helped one species after another to develop higher and higher forms of life, until at the end of this 2500 million year period it succeeded in bringing out the human species.

Digressing a little more, what was the purpose in bringing out the human Species? The creative act could not have taken place without a purpose. But this purpose refers to us and not to the silent cause of the creation, namely the ever present Witoess. When all are One, that state cannot be realised. Only in the dual state of subject and object the realisation of oneness can be conceived. It is for the purpose of such realisation of Ooeness that the creative

act and evolutionary forms originated. But until this human race was brought out, the idea remained unfulfilled. For, it is only the human species that is endowed with the faculty of understanding the subject-object relationship and realise the unity behind it. Thus the purpose of creation can be said to have been fulfilled in having brought out man on this planet. But the form in which he finds himself is something of an accident. It could have been any other form, if the course of evolution had been different. Our point is that it took nearly 2500 million years for the favourable circumstances to develop for the Cosmic idea to attain fruition. But the idea itself germinated and obtained fruition in a millionth of a second or less perhaps.

Coming back to human ideas and their fructification, it is common knowledge that they depend for their fruition on the intensity of the idea itself and on time, place and environment. If we decide to signify these three latter factors by a single expression circumstances then we may say ideas are translated into successful actions only under congenial circumstances. If we look into the history of the most advanced countries of today, we find innumerable instances of great achievements in the political as well as in other fields of activity. To name only a few, the French Revolution, the American War of Independence, the Russian and Chinese Revolutions, the emancipation of some of the Asiatic nations are instances in the political field. Advancement in some of the fine arts, in technology and Science are fairly well known. But all these achieve-

ments have been preceded by long years of brooding and activity by successive generations of men. All these ideas collect together and grow in intensity. At the same time the reservoir of ideas furnishes an atmosphere for the generations following. They are subject to this influence and their minds are given an orientation, so that more people join the movement unconsciously. The idea in the subtle world becomes more and more intense in the course of several generations and then, when the circumstances are favourable it manifests itself violently as a great achievement.

That a mental atmosphere is created by the ideas contributed by the preceding generations of men and that they really influence the succeeding generations is very well illustrated by the capacity shown by our children to learn many new things much quicker than we had shown in our days, although these are all as novel to them as they were to us. Handling a cycle, motor cycle, car or aeroplane, or a radio set, all these come more naturally and easily to them than it did to us. While many people proficient in the theory of the operation of a radio set among us feel helpless when something is wrong with it, a young man with not even a high school education comes along, finds out what is wrong and puts it right. There are innumerable examples of this type within the knowledge of all of us. When there is an accumulation of an electric charge somewhere, neighbouring metals also acquire the charge by being

influenced by the accumulated charge. An exactly identical thing takes place with mental phenomena.

We said already in Chapter VII, when discussing about "Past and Present", that every desire arising in the mind emerges as an accomplished one. This applies to the common combined desire of many people also. So then, what is an accomplished fact in the mental world only unfolds itself to the distant future generation, say after a few centuries, when realisation takes place. In this context it is well to remember that the older generation of people imbued with an idea, which could not obtain fulfilment during their life-time, are reborn with the self-same idea and add their intensified contribution to that particular idea.

In regard to ideas we may make one general observation applicable to all countries. The life of a nation is marked by three broad sub-divisions, namely (1) the age of imagination; (2) the age of reasoning and acquirement of knowledge; and (3) the age of experimental verification. The world of today is in this last phase. Our imaginative faculty is pitiable indeed, so much so that unless we see a thing done before our eyes we cannot understand or grasp it. Owing to lack of imagination, colossal sums of money are wasted every year in research, by establishing costly laboratories, by engaging an army of scientists to make some routine observations and then sifting all the mass of data obtained through an electronic brain. People do not realise that all knowledge can be obtained without any

expense by sitting in an easy-chair and exercising the mind. The whole universe is just an idea of the mind; it is contained within the mind. So what difficulty is there to probe and ascertain the properties or behaviour of substances or atoms or anything in fact? Practically every achievement of today is the product of a mass of minds and not of one single mind. In this process men are being gradually reduced to unthinking automata.

We have seen, however, how mass minds work and achieve their common aims. The process is always a slow one, since men are most divergent in age, experience, aims and faiths.

Until the idea gains sufficient momentum in the mental plane and until external circumstances are favourable for the fructification of the idea, the mass idea just keeps on swelling in volume and intensity. We may now proceed further with the consideration of the individual mind, as this is the subject to which our attention is mainly confined.

CHAPTER XII.

THE CONTROL OF THE MIND

We said in Chapter IV that life process is nothing else but mental activity or processes. The art of living therefore centres round the art of taking hold and developing one's Mind. But most people do not ordinarily think of Mind as something which can be objectively dealt with and trained to definite ends. We all just obey the silent promptings from within, however capricious they be. The whims and fancies of the Mind rule the course of our conduct and our life is just an accumulated record of these happenings day after day. Such haphazard living results only in a life spent without a definite object and at the approach of death in deep regrets.

If it were realised fully that Mind can also be trained and disciplined, in the same manner as the body is trained, then the course of one's life would be much more orderly, purposeful and in general happier. Such a training, which should form the fundamental part of the education of the young, has never even been attempted, with all the vaunted progress that is now claimed to have been made. It is much more necessary to train the mind before the body, as the body is only a tool of the mind and can be more easily trained when once the Mind is disciplined.

The question then arises, how the Mind is to be trained and with what? Mind can be trained only by the Mind and

nothing else is of any avail. Nothing is really more mysterious and so little understood as Mind. Were it not so, people in general would be much happier and more contented than they are. It is because the Mind appears to be so overpowering and masterful that people allow themselves to be the victims of its tyranny and undergo all sorts of unhappiness and misery in life.

The methods of tackling the mind and bringing it under one's control have been studied, practised and preached in India as early perhaps as in the post Vedic days by the Rishis of old. The science of Yoga is a result of their fruitful labours. *In no other literature, ancient or modern, do we come across any such lucid understanding of the subject of Mind, its working and of the method of bringing it under control. The greatest exponent of the science of Yoga is Patanjali and it would be instructive to summarise here the whole of his teachings relating to the subject of Mind.*

PATANJALI'S YOGA SUTRAS

The Mind is in one of five different states according to Patanjali, viz., (1) True Cognition; (2) False Cognition; (3) Deceptive Cognition; (4) Memory and (5) Deep sleep. We can simplify this sub-division by bringing the first three under one classification namely Cognition; then we have only three states of the Mind.

Let us consider them one by one. Deep sleep is a denial of the other two states and represents the Mind in an un-

manifested or potential condition. Secondly, memory is past Cognitions in manifestation. Dream is likewise a manifestation of memory, when the sense organs are inoperative and time-space factors are shed away. Memory arises out of the fact that experiences of the objects of perception are indestructible. For our present purpose we may refrain from going deeper into the question of memory and sleep, since these have been already discussed and we need only examine the Mind in the waking or conscious state, which is made up of cognitions, according to Patanjali.

The phenomena of Cognition is of three-fold nature according to Patanjali, *viz.*, (1) Illumination (Satwa); (2) Movement or activity (Rajas) and (3) Stability (Tamas), inertia or object. It arises from the five primal elements of Nature and the corresponding powers of sensation in living bodies enlivening the sense organs, revealing the nature of the elements. The five primal elements of Nature are, as is well known (1) Akasa; (2) Motion; (3) Tejas or Electricity; (4) Fluidity and (5) Solidity.

Then the purpose of Cognition is either Enjoyment or Release. Let us consider these various aspects in detail. But before we do so, let us first clear our Minds as to how cognition comes into operation. Patanjali says that it arises out of the differentiation of the power of owning and being owned, *i. e.*, out of subject-object relationship. This induces a flow or movement from subject to object and then a reverse movement from object to subject, completing the act

of Cognition resulting in illumination. So then Cognition is acceptance of the subject - object relationship.

Simultaneously with the existence of this relationship, there is a purpose attached to the act of Cognition. It is either Enjoyment or Release. Hence for the achievement of either, Cognition is necessary. This denies completely the half-truths propounded by many regarding the state of Release or Samadhi and also many current ideas regarding Mind-Control, all based on stupefying the sense organs and so forth. It should clearly be understood that Cognition is a feature of Release as much as of the state of Enjoyment.

The difference between the two states arises only in this manner that whereas in Enjoyment, subject-object relationship is recognised and emphasised, in Release this relationship is shed and both fuse into a single state of being, so that the tendency for a movement either way is very feeble and is always momentary. In the state of Enjoyment there arises mental modifications or reactions as a result of Cognitions, whereas in Release there are no such reactions and hence no traces are left behind in the shape of memories or rather vasanas.

Now to come to the process of Cognition itself, its application is to the objective world and its purpose ordinarily is to obtain a knowledge and consequent enjoyment of the world of perceptions. How is this most effectively and precisely to be obtained?

The Mind is mostly fickle, jumping from object to object (abstract or concrete) and is never steadily fixed on any of them except on occasions when something of special interest holds the Mind to it. In this condition Cognition is feeble. For achieving effective Cognition one has to follow the following processes : (1) Dharana ; (2) Dhyana and (3) Samadhi. Dharana is the steadying of the Chith or mental movement in one spot. Dhyana is the effort at the continuation of the act of one-pointedness. Samadhi is that state of the Chith which results in the object shining alone and devoid of its own nature, as it were. The three together is known as Samyama. By performing Samyama over a number of years day after day, full knowledge of the object is gained. By performing Samyama over any specific power or attainments, not contrary to the laws of nature, those powers are obtained. So Cognition in this manner gives rise to knowledge and mental and physical powers causing bondage to them at the same time.

We now come to consider the means of controlling the Mind and thereby releasing one self from bondage. The various means mentioned, to suit the inclinations and capacities of different people, are the following :

I. Undisturbed flow of knowledge is the means of removal of the state of differentiation or ignorance which was shown to give rise to the very act of cognition. Such discriminative knowledge dawns as a result of Yogic observances which destroys the impurities of the Mind. The eightfold observances of Yoga are :

of Cognition resulting in illumination. So then Cognition is acceptance of the subject - object relationship.

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I. Undisturbed flow of knowledge is the means of removal of the state of differentiation or ignorance which was shown to give rise to the very act of cognition. Such discriminative knowledge dawns as a result of Yogic observances which destroys the impurities of the Mind. The eightfold observances of Yoga are :

1. Restraints consisting: (a) non-injury, (b) truthfulness, (c) non-covetousness, (d) continence and (e) cleanliness. These purify the Mind and help one to obtain steadiness of mind.

2. Routine observances comprising: (a) contentment, (b) purificatory actions, (c) study and (d) relegating everything to God. These bring about equanimity of Mind.

3. *Posture*: It is just being steadily and comfortably seated, slackening all effort and expanding the Mind as infinite.

4. *Pranayama*: Consists in watching and steadying the upward and downward nervous current known as prana. By practising this continuously, great steadiness and one-pointedness of Mind is achieved. Three kinds of pranayama are distinguished viz., (a) Internal; (b) External and (c) Stationary. The external pranayama relates to the movement of mind towards external objects. The internal pranayama relates to images of objects stored as memories. The stationary one refers to the point of time when the downward impulse leading to external objects ceases and the upward impulse leading to the brain begins or vice versa. In any case, pranayama does not deal with the regulation of breath in Raja Yoga practice.

5. *Pratyahara*: is the abstraction of the Mind from sense objects. The mind in this condition is in the highest state of purity and control.

6, 7 & 8. *Dharana, Dhyana & Samathi*: After reaching the state indicated in (5), one has to practise Dharana, Dhyana and Samadhi. As was already stated true knowledge of the objects of perception arise only by performing Samyama with reference to them. So then by eschewing all such objects which enslave the Mind and practising Samyama, the mind reaches the highest state of purity and self control. These in brief are the teachings of Patanjali on the nature of the Mind and its control.

It will immediately be noted that the process of Mind control that has been outlined is a mere mechanical routine for bringing the Mind under a certain discipline. It is bound to be a long and arduous practice. It is however commonly believed that Raja Yoga propounded by Patanjali does not go beyond this. This is a wrong notion. For, the central idea of this teaching is clearly stated in the Sutra which reads "Undisturbed flow of knowledge is the means of removal of the state of differentiation or Ignorance". The practices of Yoga should lead up to it. Knowledge is the one and only means for removing ignorance and leading to the emancipation of Mind.

COMBINATION OF EXPERIENCE AND KNOWLEDGE

Vasishta advocates the direct process. The path of enquiry leads directly and quickly to knowledge. All other means adapted to the varying states of development and intellectual capacities of men, may lead to the enquiry state but never directly to knowledge.

The path advocated in the Bhagavad Gita is also this, namely performance of the duties falling to the lot of each individual according to his birth and station in life without any attachment or aversion to the results, combined with knowledge and devotion. Right knowledge is obtained by the eager and dispassionate enquirer from the very duties and actions performed by him and after knowledge is obtained, it is put to test by the very same actions. How else can a person be said to have obtained knowledge and the resulting stability of mind, if he is not subject to the tests of worldly activities. The freedom obtained through pursuit of the path of knowledge is the freedom from enslavement of the bonds of worldly life and it cannot be verified by running away from the contact of the things of the world.

But one must know first what knowledge is. Ordinarily the Mind is considered as the storehouse of knowledge although it is only a storehouse of information but the knowledge that we here speak of is that of the Mind itself. This we have dealt with in detail in the preceding chapters and here we have to consider them all together and see how best these ideas can be applied to the control of the Mind.

We have seen that there are three aspects of the Mind, viz., (1) perception or cognition, both past and present; (2) Reactions to these perceptions in the form of mental moods and (3) Imagination. We have also seen that of these three aspects the first one, arising from the Mind

coming in contact with objects and becoming it, is by itself not of an enslaving nature. Objects, as we have said, are in themselves featureless or neutral and do not colour the mind. The mind with its own predispositions and predilections assumes various colours or moods on contact with objects. The moods are imagined in advance and contacts of objects releases one of these moods according to the then state of mind of the person.

It is often said that Mind is to be controlled only by withdrawing the senses from sense objects. This is neither possible of achievement nor desirable. We cannot stupefy all the senses and still be said to live at all. We may as well end existence. It is really, moreover, impossible to withdraw the senses from contact with objects, while the sense organs are alive. The natural functions of the sense organs cannot and should not be suppressed. Suppression can be achieved only for a time and then one will inevitably return to the contact of his surroundings with renewed vigour. There is also another aspect which results in far greater danger to the person in the long run. That is, when a person, without a proper knowledge and experience of things, avoids them and withdraws into himself, then at some later stage, when the contact with the very same things arises, the natural functions and cravings burst their bonds and effect the ruin of the person completely. All of us are acquainted with numerous such instances in life.

The method then of withdrawing the sense is both impossible and imprudent.

Control then should really be applied to reactions to external stimuli in the shape of perceptions and to the exercise of imaginative faculty around immediate and past perceptions. We shall consider these two aspects together, as reactions are mostly imagination-born. The reaction to any particular stimulus such as the sight of an object or the hearing of sound vibrations varies with different people; no two of them probably being alike. It depends partly on the mood of each person at the moment and partly on the way everyone of them has reacted on previous occasions, accumulating a sort of bias, which we call Vasana. Were it quite a novel stimulus, to which none of them had previously been accustomed and at which all of them are taken by surprise, there will be no immediate reaction, except of course one of surprise but very soon they will have formed their own opinions and begin to express their reaction, in all likelihood, in differing ways and degrees. The reacting tendency is therefore peculiar to each individual self. It is not derived from any external source. It is just imagined by each person and repeated experience of any such reaction establishes in all a habit of reacting in a like manner in the future. In this way we have built up our reacting tendency, each one in his own way and differently too.

These reactions are expressed in the shape of a sense of pleasure or pain or surprise or some other feeling. It is obvious that the life of each individual in essence is measured

in terms of the extent of enjoyment of each different feeling. All the deeds and achievements are ultimately to be expressed in the shape of a sense of elation or enjoyment. The predominant feeling in the man stamps him out as one with that feeling running high throughout his career. One man is predominantly happy, another miserable, a third one always in love and either happy or otherwise, a fourth one always in anger and so forth. Since then it is these feelings that disturb the placidity and equanimity, that would otherwise characterise everyone, Control can be spoken of only in terms of such reactions. If these reactions are controlled, then peace of Mind is established.

These reactions are all, as we stated already, imagined by oneself. Imaginative activity is at the bottom of man's troubles and tribulations. Man foists various qualities, derived from his own imagination, on external objects and experiences diverse feelings in himself subsequently.

CHAPTER XIII.

SAMADHI

Few people have any conception of what the state of Samadhi is. Literature, both ancient and modern, some of which considered authoritative, abound in references to this mental state. They are at great pains to elaborate and explain the purpose of this state and the actual experiences undergone during its continuance. Many are the instances cited of Rishis, Seers or Siddhas who had attained this state and who had enjoyed ecstatic delight in that condition. It is generally stated that this state of Samadhi may endure through hours and even days. Puranas speak of instances of Samadhi, state continuing for centuries and Yugas. Even enlightened people take these statements at their face value and do not for a moment stop to consider whether they were meant to be so literally understood.

The word "Samadhi" is also frequently used to convey the idea of "Release" from bodily fetters *i.e.*, to the state of death. That is to say, while "Death" is the expression used to denote cessation of life in ordinary mortals, saints and sages are said to have attained Samadhi when the same condition overtakes them. Many are the instances cited of such great souls having suddenly vanished with their bodies or transformed into a "Jyoti" or blaze of light and disappeared.

Ordinarily, however, the expression is used to signify a state as good as death but with life still coursing through

the body. It therefore denotes a condition wherein mind and sense organs are inactive. It is a state of suspended animation. There are two different kinds of Samadhi, viz., (1) Sa-vikalpam; (2) Nir-vikalpam. The former denotes a condition in which the Mind is wholly absorbed in one thing or idea to the exclusion of everything else and the activity of the senses is totally withdrawn by the very nature of the absorption of the Mind. The other state is that in which the mind is withdrawn even from that single object or idea i.e., it is functionless. In the former state, subject-object relationship persists, whereas in the latter even this relationship is non-existent. These are the current ideas of Samadhi.

That many of these statements offend our reason is obvious; they have proceeded from the minds of people who have not either actually experienced these states, or from those who have grossly misunderstood the references in the ancient literature. Two great and indisputable authorities, such as Patanjali and Vasishtha, do not lend support to these erroneous ideas. Let us consider these in detail and satisfy ourselves how far we can give credence to the above statements.

Before we do so, we should be clear about the object of attaining this state and its purpose in life. Nothing is really gained by stupefying the senses by elaborate and laborious practices. Such a state is much more easily gained by narcotics or opiates. If the object is to quell the turbulent mind and achieve the mental repose resulting

therefrom, stupefying the senses will not help us, since immediately after the mind comes out of the torpor, it becomes as active and restless as before. Again, to be always in a state of Samadhi of this nature, apart from the fact that it is impossible to achieve, has no purpose, since one can as well be dead. Samadhi as ordinarily understood can only be a means to an end and not an end in itself. After one has mastered the art, so to say, and learned to get into it at one's will, it must be his endeavour to come to normal conscious life and deal with it in perfect peace and contentment. If this end be not achieved by getting into the state of Samadhi, it might as well be discarded, as life would have been mis-spent in the pursuit of such an attainment. It is clear then that Samadhi is just a course of practice to train the Mind.

Patanjali, in his Yoga-sutras, treats of Samadhi as only a means of attaining perceptual knowledge of objects or attaining powers with reference to a desired end. Samadhi is defined thus:

"The continuation of the effort by the Chith (*i.e.*, mental essence) to hold on to a single object, resulting in the object shining alone and devoid, as it were, of its own nature is Samadhi."

It is therefore a course of practice to withdraw the mind at will and fix it on definite objects. More is not claimed for it. Nowhere is it stated that the Mind can remain rooted to the object for days together or even hours

on end. The nature of the mind is such that it cannot remain fastened to a single object for more than some seconds, or after some considerable training, for some minutes. Then the mind begins to wander, or one becomes drowsy ; then one has to turn the mind again to the object. Only in this way can a sitting extend to hours and not by the mind remaining fixed on the object during all the time. Therefore the statements in puranas, referring to Samadhi for hundreds of years, should be understood to mean that the person continued the practice during successive births.

From the foregoing, it is fairly evident that the state of Samadhi, dealing as it does with the control of the mind, has nothing in it of such a special feature that the laws of Nature could be transgressed. The statements, then, that the physical body disappeared or was transformed into a Jyoti, should not at all be understood literally.

We may now proceed to enquire what the real state of Samadhi is like, what its objects are and how best to obtain it ?

In the Yoga Vasishta, Samadhi is defined as a perfectly balanced mental state, in which condition the mind maintains an unperturbed calm under all conditions of stress or provocation. It has perforce reference only to wakeful life. Samadhi is not an insensible state but one of intense awareness. The person is fully conscious of his surroundings, all the senses being alive and active, capable of reception and response to sense perceptions. It is wrong to consider

that sense perceptions by themselves disturb the mind since they are featureless inherently, *i.e.*, neutral in reaction. What actually does disturb the mind is one's own varying reacting tendency to external sense perceptions, with which each one associates his own ideas of pleasure or pain or other moods. Such moods are foreign to external objects and are attributes of the conjoining mind.

It is the freedom from such mental reactions that has to be striven for to obtain mental balance.

Then coming to the object of Samadhi, it is clearly implied in the very definition. It is to preserve mental equanimity under all conditions and states of life which befall a man and which he can never foresee. In this mental state one is most capable of dealing efficiently with life and its problems. He obtains the maximum comfort and happiness in life as a result. Samadhi then has reference to life and living and is not a cowardly escape from it nor a living death.

Such a mental state cannot obviously be achieved by any other practice, means or process, except by the acquisition of knowledge. All other means may be of some help in leading one upto the path of knowledge but by themselves they cannot enable one to conquer the mind. The reason is self-evident. Let us consider for instance the other paths prescribed for release, *viz.*, (1) Devotion or Bhakti; (2) Karma or faithful observance of duty and (3) Yoga. All these paths have one thing in common, *viz.*,

that they focus the mind on certain definite things. However laudable they may be, they bring it again under some new bondage. It is something like replacing iron chains by golden fetters. Mind's vision is narrowed by every one of these means and the mind is far from being under control. The ecstatic delight of the devotee denotes a state of extreme mental stress and not mental equilibrium. The outlook of the Karma-Yogin is all right as far as it goes. But the mind is not thereby controlled, its vagaries checked and its idiosyncracies smoothed out. Without such training and handling, the mind can never attain a state of balance. And lastly the Raja-Yogin, who does deal with the mind control, however, attaches the mind to definite objects or ideas and the achievement consists in attaining concentration of mind on definite objects. None of these practices even remotely pretend to prevent the mind from assuming its various moods, such as pleasure and pain, elation and dejection and so forth. And so long as mind is inclined to be modified in this manner, mental equilibrium is not possible.

Mental moods can be got rid of only by searching and dispassionate enquiry into the causes of the moods, into the nature of things and the relationship between mental modifications and external things, the contact of which brings about the moods or modifications and lastly by the ultimate enquiry into the nature of the "Self". This constitutes true knowledge. The dawn of knowledge alone will quell the turbulent mind and when mind is thoroughly

clarified as a result of enquiry, it ceases to respond to or be modified by any external stimuli. This indicates the state of perfect mental equipoise. This is real Samadhi.

The control of the mind has significance only in respect of the following mental processes and is devoid of any meaning with regard to sense perceptions, as it has already been clearly established that it is both impossible and futile to try to achieve such sense control, so long as there is a physical body endowed with sense organs. The processes in consideration are :—

1. Reactions to sense impressions from external sources.
2. Reactions to memories of things and events (internal perceptions)
3. Imagination.

bondage. Release can be obtained then only by exercising memory less and less. Past events are always associated with a sense of pleasure or pain and nothing can be done to change them. It is futile to think about them at all, as they only disturb the otherwise peaceful mind. By suppressing memory altogether not only is the mind much more at peace but its tendency to react to fresh impulses is also rendered more and more feeble. No longer will the mind react violently to new ideas and events; it will be very much more placid and serene.

Then the next thing to be suppressed is the imaginative activity. This is the creative aspect of the mind which continuously keeps forging fresh bonds. When memory is not at play this aspect is brought into activity. The vital factor in continuing the process of life is imaginative activity and it is the mainspring of change in the life process. But for it, life would not exhibit such innumerable differences between the various species and among the various units belonging to the same species. Added zest to life is conferred by the exercise of imaginative faculty and the course of life process is changed. New activities arise with new interests and the man's course of conduct changes. The evolutionary process is thereby prolonged. If this imaginative faculty is voluntarily suppressed, there is bound to be a marked change. There will be no new activity, no change, no throwing the mind off its regular track into new channels. The future life process, which is largely deter-

mined by imagination, is considerably shortened in time scale and it would be marked by a general evenness.

So then by suppressing memory the past is wiped out and by suppressing imagination the future is wiped out. What remains is the immediate present, which is the outcome of the unfulfilled past. When this too has borne fruit and there are no more old scores to be paid to create further mental activity, the mind is in perfect repose. Past, present and future merge in that state.

We shall next consider how to suppress memory and imaginative activity. In the first place these activities are brought into play only in idle moments or leisure hours, when we are not otherwise engaged. During these moments, when either sort of activity arises, the immediate thing to be done is to ruminate over the idea, analyse and reason it out, going into the questions how and what for and so forth. If it be a past experience that is brought into reminiscence accompanied by some kind of feeling as pain, pleasure or some other feeling, then the mind must be made to recognise the fact that the past is dead and gone and nothing can be done to alter it. It is futile to dwell on it or even to try to recall it as nothing is gained thereby. It is absurd to try to derive any feelings out of the dead past. Everytime the ghosts rise up from the past they must be suppressed not forcibly but by gentle persuasion and reasoning. If this suppressing process be continuously repeated, as often as the past is brought before the Mind,

then the suppressive tendency gains ascendancy over the active tendency. The same procedure is to be adopted with respect to imaginative activity. Imagination generally turns round planning the future. The future is an indeterminate or unpredictable thing to most people and no one can say what will happen at the next moment and so it will be mere foolishness to be indulging in day dreams. Counter-*imagination is the most potent weapon to suppress all these fantasies about the future or from the past.* The practical minded and wise man never turns his mind to the past or future but concerns himself with the immediate present. He deals with the realities of the empirical life. But then, even with regard to the present, there should be no voluntary effort at doing anything. It is not thereby meant that one should be absolutely inactive and inert. Whatever one has to do may be carried on and immediately forgotten. Nothing should be done with a purpose or a motive. In fact, any kind of act, good or bad, in popular conception, may be done when there is no motive behind the act.

Such is the proper method of control of the Mind and not the strenuous and tortuous practices prescribed in some of the books on Yoga. These, besides making exacting demands as to time, place and body conditions, which cannot be fulfilled in modern environment, are truly ineffective. On the other hand the method prescribed and propounded by the Sage Vasishtha, is very simple and most effective and can be practiced anywhere and at all times. It

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is unfailing in its results, since it tackles the mind directly and squarely and reshapes it properly.

The phenomenon of life exhibits, as we have shown in the earlier chapters, a driving force derived from past longings and efforts which combined with the present efforts determine the future. The mind is always keyed to planning and doing and so the life process goes merrily along. If on the other hand all efforts and plans turn round not doing anything and not planning, then there is a brake to the life process naturally. The motive force behind the current of life becomes feebler and feebler in the process until zero potential is established from which no current can flow.

Thus the control of mind is achieved by the reverse process to the expansion of mind. The so-called expansion is really burdening the mind and intensifying the bondage. We do this consciously and with voluntary effort, not knowing the consequences thereof. Not to think and not to do anything should really require no effort. It should be the simplest thing imaginable. But actually much effort is really needed, at least in the early stages, since the positive effort has gained great strength and tenacity, to counteract which an equal and opposite negative effort is needed. The aim of all this is to keep a perfectly balanced and even mind

It is at once evident from what has been said above that the blankness of mind, by which name the state is known in popular language, is not a dull and stupid state. It is a state which is attained after much intense mental activity,

as effort is continuously needed to prevent the mind from running after objects and ideas. By repeated effort over a prolonged period will be attained that state of tranquility which will not be thrown into ripples by any circumstances. In this state the mind just registers but does not react. Creation and destruction of reactions take place instantaneously and continuously. Then we can say that the highest mind control has been achieved.

CHAPTER XIV.

GROSS CONDITION OF OBJECTS

Neither science nor modern philosophy has ever seriously enquired whether the materiality of the objective world is an absolute reality and whether the properties such as weight, volume or hardness associated with material objects are valid or verified truths. These properties have just been accepted as true without question, for they seem to be so palpable; they are felt and experienced as such by us and to question them would seem to question the sanity of the doubter. But in spite of such unmistakable and palpable evidences, supported by a wealth of scientific data, measurements etc., there are powerful reasons to reject the evidence of our senses and to conclude that the grossness associated with matter is not a real property of matter but is associated with the perceiving mind and transferred to the object.

Let us first examine how the sense of grossness is obtained by us. All the scientific measurements and facts are ultimately based on the evidence of our senses and so it will be sufficient for our purpose if we examine the validity of our sense perceptions in relation to the sensation of grossness. Now, only two of the five senses are competent to ascertain and assess these properties, *viz.*, the sense of vision and the sense of touch; the other senses not coming in consideration for the purpose. The mechanism of the process of perception is as follows :—

In each case an impulse is sent through the nervous system which terminates at the brain cells causing a disturbance amidst them which in turn give rise to another impulse of a subtler nature resulting in perception or knowledge of the object.

We have here a process operating in three different planes. Firstly we have the state of gross body characterised by form and substance, which are of the same nature as the sense organs, both of which are enlivened by the senses. Secondly we have the nervous impulses belonging to a different plane altogether, outside the range of the sense organs and of the nature of an invisible flow. None of the properties of gross matter are attributable to this state. Thirdly we have the state of illumination or knowledge of the object. This again has none of the properties characteristic of the other two states. There is no inertness in it nor flow nor movement. It is of the nature of illumination revealing everything to us. By no scientific theory or twist of logic can we establish any relationships between these three differing and divergent states. Yet that very phenomenon is ever at play in bringing about cognition, or perception. These three states in the inverse order are known as Satwa, Rajas and Tamas respectively in the ancient Hindu Literature.

Now coming to the subject proper, *viz.*, the grossness of material objects, is not a fact revealed by the sense organs, which alone are competent for the purpose, being

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Now coming to the subject proper, viz., the grossness of material objects, is not a fact revealed by the sense organs, which alone are competent for the purpose, being

of the same category as the objects. But they are as dead as the objects. Everything belonging to the same plane of existence is rejected for the purpose of establishing the gross condition of the object. A nervous impulse, belonging to a different plane and of a subtler nature, is relied upon to establish something altogether outside its range. This is no better than depending on the nose to judge the beauty of an object or on the tongue to judge the harmony of sounds. So the nervous impulses which give rise to mental impression of the idea of a body cannot be anything else but non-material subtle percepts. A percept of grossness is what is really obtained. The grossness is therefore a mental idea and not a characteristic of the object perceived. The weight, strength and hardness of the object are not physically transferred to the mind that it can justifiably attribute those properties to the object. Only ideas of these properties are engraved on the mind.

Consider the case of a mind without any previous experience of a physical object. At the first sight of it the impression received by the mind would be some vague and ill defined idea without any exactness as to the properties like weight, roughness etc. The object here is really not so vague because the mind concerned here is so, nor does it change according to the changing ideas of the perceiving mind. When the same mind however comes in contact with the object repeatedly, it obtains more exact and clear ideas of the object, partly by its own self and partly by a knowledge gained from others. Thereafter it obtains the

conviction that those properties are associated with the object. What really happens is a gradual and continuous change in the mental concept of the object until it arrives to a sort of settled conviction.

Consider also the case of a mind devoid of any memory. Such a mind also would not experience the grossness of the material substance in any well defined manner. Each time it comes in contact with the object some vague idea of the object alone would be formed.

Repeated experiences of objects alone tend to form these ideas in our minds. We then begin to believe them as properties of objects forgetting that it is ideas that are condensed to a state of grossness. All our ideas are formed only in this manner. We must also remember that the ideas we form of the objects around us are not entirely our own but are acquired from others in the beginning which then becomes our own in course of time. Ideas such as grossness of material objects have been handed to us by the early species of creatures through thousands of years. So the number of repetitions of these impressions, amounting to experiences, would be in countless millions and so wonder then that we cannot shake off the obsession that the said properties are characteristic of objects. Repeated experiences combined with memory have contributed to strengthen in us this false knowledge.

Consider the case of the dead body having all the sense organs intact. It does not cognise the objects of our

experiences. Why? For the mind that infused life in the body as well as the objects around it is no longer in evidence. Again two material objects do not cognise each other since they have no existence in their own nature. They both have an existence only in the mind that cognises them. They were imagined by the Mind originally and these were cognised subsequently by the mind as imagined. I can for instance imagine any two things and also arrange any kind of interaction between them in my mind. But these products of my imagination cannot interact by themselves and cannot even be aware of each other. It is the same with our minds and external objects. These objects, as we said before, do not have a real independent existence; they depend on the mind to testify to their existence. If they had an existence in their own nature they should be in a position to cognise one another without the intervention of the mind. But when they are dependent on the mind for being cognised then they can be only of the nature of the mind.

A test of reality is that the thing considered must be of an enduring nature. Now the existence of gross objects is testified to by the senses. But these have only a very short span of life, no better than a bubble, compared to the infinity of time and they cannot therefore testify to the past or to the future. If we exclude these ephemeral senses we have no other means of establishing their existence. Thus an enduring existence of objects cannot be established at all from one's own experience just as we cannot establish our own birth or death. They are not our experience, they amount

only to an inference. Objects rise into Consciousness only when the light of the mind is turned on to them, not when the mind is preoccupied with other things. When the mind does turn its attention to particular objects, it does it through the senses, which are lighted up together with the objects simultaneously. The mind is then temporarily deprived of its innate powers of omniscience and is brought to the level of the objects and becomes one with them. Then cognition is said to arise. This happens at every cognition so that, by being continually in association with objects, the mind partakes of the nature of objects almost entirely and loses the power to reflect on its own nature. Thus it is that the non-existent objects seem to us to be enduring things. The mind behind them takes a secondary place. Only if the mind gets out of this thralldom and looks upon the objects in a detached and dispassionate manner, it can arrive at the truth.

So then objects are mere ideas of the mind, which have condensed to a concrete shape by the imaginative process. If the opposite of grossness be continually imagined, *i.e.*, that the objects are mere ideas and do not exist as things, then this takes a firm root in the mind so that it becomes a fact in course of time. Objects over which we have lost interest and which we consequently do not recall often, take on such a vague and shadowy appearance in our minds. Such is also the experience of the Jivan-Mukthas to whom objects appear in a two-fold manner. Ordinarily their minds are dissolved in Atman, as it were, so that consciousness

to surroundings is lost. Objects then do not exist for them in that state. But when their minds are turned to taking note of their surroundings the objects rise into Consciousness by virtue of vasanas which will terminate only with the death of the body. The instinct of the species is not destroyed until the body is destroyed. Thereafter there will be no more physical body for them nor objects, if these latter at all rise in Consciousness. They are then purely of the nature of ideas. The materiality of objects is then finally shed away.

In Chapter III, it would be remembered, it was stated that true evolution refers to the successive growth of ideas only. The significance of that statement would now be clear. Inanimate Nature, plants, animals and human beings are all mere ideas and the form and substance in which they manifest themselves are also ideas seen through the defective sense organs. Ideas appear to have taken form and substance in the same manner that people who believe in ghosts and whose minds are saturated with them do actually even see them, while others cannot. Thus every phenomenon connected with all matter as well as living beings, their various functions such as birth, growth, death etc. are all no more than ideas. Thus it would be more correct to speak of evolution of ideas about the world rather than evolution of the world itself.

CHAPTER XV

SUBJECT – OBJECT.

In the last chapter we have seen that all gross matter, in fact, the external world of perceptions is really in the shape of a bundle of mental ideas in varying degrees of condensation, according to the number of repetitions of experience which each individual has. What is vague or ill defined in some may be very sharply defined and all-comprehending in others. Desire is at the root of this phenomena giving rise to the repetitions of experience. Objects then are ideas and an idea is a mental state. The mind takes the form of an idea and then reacts to it in some manner as with a sense of pleasure or pain or some other feeling. This mental feeling is also another state of mind. Hence in such cognising state or state of awareness, the mind can be only either in the state of perception or in the state of reaction in the shape of a mental feeling. If for a moment it is in neither of these two states it must be in a non-cognising state as in deep sleep or state of mental quiescence in waking.

Summarising the above, the mind is either in the state of cognition or non-cognition. In the state of cognition it can be again in one of the two states, *viz.*, either of perception or reaction to perceptions. To perceive, the mind has to identify itself with the object, *i.e.*, be one with it but so long as it is in the state of perception it is not aware of it; it becomes conscious of the

object only when it releases itself from the object and stands aloof as a Witness. That is, perception arises after the process of identification. So also is the case with the state of reaction. The mind is transformed into a state of pleasure or pain and the actual sense of it arises at a subsequent instant of time when the mind stands as a Witness. The inference from these is that all mental processes giving rise to various states of the mind or transformations are registered or are made aware of only in the neutral or non-cognising state of the mind. That is the very foundation of all mental processes. Without such a state how can perceptions arise, for perception presupposes the duality of subject and object? The objects here are the mental states themselves or mental processes. The subject then must be the neutral state of the mind. Subject and object then are only the two primary states of the mind itself, *viz.*, the non-cognising and cognising or the "Self" and "not-self".

The non-cognising state arises, as we said before, both in the waking state and in deep sleep. There is, however, a fundamental difference between these two apparently similar conditions. Sleep is a state in which mental phenomena like perception and reaction cannot take place, owing to the fact that the minute organisms, which transform subtle ideas of the mind into material forms and *vice versa*, are completely inactive and at rest. A subtle thing like mind can however be known only in the presence of a gross thing but in sleep the two are not in communion with each other. On the other hand, in the state of mental quiescence in waking

the possibility of cognition is there at every instant, although it may not be actually in the state of cognition. It is the state of activity in restraint. So, when we speak of the fundamental state of the mind, it is this latter state that is to be understood.

Let us now consider the state of mental equilibrium or poise in waking. Mental phenomena take place with reference to this state. Each phenomenon or thought has to be referred back to this state of reference. As thought follows thought they are all referred back to this state. A common subject looks to be giving rise to multitudes of thought forms in the shape of objects, which is clearly impossible. The only inference then is that all possible thought forms or objects are already lying latent in the subject or that all these thought forms are unreal or imaginary, as the water in the mirage or silver is the mother-of-pearl.

Again every thought or idea is of an instantaneous nature. It occurs as a flash, disappears and then reappears. The process is that of repeated and quick reference to the subject, without which cognition is not possible and thought forms cannot be sustained. When a particular thought form or idea is held on for some interval of time, then the idea takes some shape and the illusion of picture seen. Although we realise the true nature of the still photographs flashed on the silver screen in a motion picture, still the illusion of the narrative persists in our minds. It may now be seen how such instantaneous and subtle movements, as constitute

mental processes and perceptions of the external world, cannot possibly give rise to concrete objects having form and substance.

This in short is the nature of the subject-object relationship or the "Self" and the "not-self" of the phenomenal world. All objects of the external world are mere ideas arising in a common unvarying Subject and having that span of existence as the subject determines from time to time.

In the first chapter we spoke of two streams of flow, *viz.*, the larger, Universal or Cosmic one and the microcosmic or individual flow. It will be realised that this Cosmic stream has successively given rise to the inanimate world, plant life, animal life and lastly to the human species. These various forms or Cosmic ideas, which are unalterable or alterable only by the Cosmic process itself, form the objective world for the individual stream. To these ideas have been added other ideas of man evolved out of his own imagination thus enriching the store of the objective world. These two sets of ideas form the "Object state" for the individual mind.

Again the Cosmic process in its successive unfoldment, manifesting the Cosmic imaginative activity, has given rise to the gradual development of separate individual imaginative activity in the successive stages of evolutionary process. The human being is the culminating product with the highest imaginative faculty. While the rudiments of imagination, which the rest of the creation is endowed with, is sufficient only to feed and protect the creatures, its full maturity in

man has enabled him to go beyond and translate the mental activity into concrete objects, of course with the aid of the objects of Cosmic activity. Thus a new series of ideas are being constantly added to the store which Nature has furnished. Man is so to say continually creating out of the vast materials furnished by Nature. So we have two streams of imaginative activity in which the Cosmic activity plays the role of objects for the individualised activity. Cosmic activity is no more than the sum total of the activity of all created things.

Imaginative activity of the individual may thus be said to be the faculty to take on various objective forms, be they those furnished by Nature or evolved by man. The greater the number of forms taken, the wider the imaginative faculty. But what is the purpose of taking on unceasingly this subject - object relationship? The purpose, as stated in Chapter XII by the sage Patanjali, is either Enjoyment or Release. The fusing of the subject - object into one is Enjoyment or Release. Sense of enjoyment leads to recurring efforts at obtaining it, whereas a sense of Release terminates the life process or subject - object relationship or Spirit - Matter combination, all of which mean the same thing.

Now this sense of enjoyment gives rise to a set of reactions, which is a new train of ideas of the imaginative faculty in man and which is absent in the lower scale of life or say feebly present. The association of this new train of ideas with the other ideas spoken of above distinguishes

"Mind" from "Chith". When mind sheds reacting tendency it is transformed into "Chith" or the Cosmic mind.

Thus in the case of man the objective states can be either (1) Cosmic ideas called *Objects of Nature* or (2) ideas evolved by man manifested as *objects of his own creation* or (3) a state of reaction arising out of either of the two other states. These then are the three states of the waking mind in its object-aspect. In any case all objective states are included in these three categories and they are all mere ideas or modes of the mind.

It may be noted that when man sheds the reacting tendencies through experience and training, his mental movement is akin to that of Chith or Cosmic movement. But even then there is a difference. The Universal movement is not conscious of its movement for it did not generate it of its own volition. It is called into being by the combined desire of all created things and as this combined desire will never cease, the movement of Chith is unending and eternal. The individual movement on the other hand knows its movement, realises its subject-object states and is thereby enabled to subside. In the Cosmic movement there is not this distinction of subject and object. More of this in the next chapter.

CHAPTER XVI

THE UNITY OF EXISTENCE

The world of phenomenal existence is based on the recognition of the duality of subject and object. In the preceding chapters we discussed how all objects exist only as ideas of the mind or are first reduced to the subtle state before being cognised. No external object, in whatever state of grossness, enters into comprehension by the mind without divesting itself of its materiality and being transformed into subtle vibrations. We also saw in the previous chapter that ideas are just modes or states of the mind. Thus the object - subject existence is reduced to mere mental states of knower and object of knowledge.

We may now recall what we said in chapter III about the "Self" and the idea of self oscillating between the "Self" and an imaginary outside point thereby giving rise to the evolutionary process. One end of this oscillating (or vacillating) movement, known as Chith, is the Subject or "Self" and the other end is the object. It is immediately clear that these three states must be identical fundamentally since nothing else is there that can change this identity. But they all appear to be different because of the extraneous factors of time and place with which the functioning of our minds is associated. Shorn of these attributes no change can be perceived. We know from experience that mind can function either associated with time and space or without them. It makes no difference to the mind but its idea of the Witnessing

Consciousness at the back of it becomes modified by these extraneous factors which are not realities.

Now while ideas or mental states are multitudinous, what about the subject? Is it one or are there many such? Should many be presumed, then the objects cognised by each separate subject as ideas cannot be correlated. There should then be a number of world organisations comprising of subject - object groups and unrelated to one another. But facts are otherwise; plant and animal and human species exhibit some common fundamental features, which cannot be accounted for, if they should be presumed to have separate subjects. One subject common to all these three kingdoms, as well as animate and inanimate worlds can alone be the Truth and will explain the relationships which is a matter of experience. Evolution is accepted on all hands to have proceeded step by step. If so a common Witness underlying the entire range of phenomena is a logical necessity. Without such a common Witness the marked progress, in which each step is based on previous experience, cannot have taken place, nor can we now look back on the course of evolution and comprehend it. Thus the Subject must be one and universal. This is said to be the Reality, the one fundamental truth, the only one entitled to be said to exist, for it is ever present without change. One subject throughout all times and ages bears witness to countless number of objects in the shape of animate and inanimate worlds. These latter, as we have already seen in the earlier chapters, are subject to continual change and they are besides instantaneous phenomena.

Now there are alternative ways of reconciling this duality of subject-object relationship. Firstly we may consider the object as an illusion like a mirage or dream which though seen is not real, as it is evanescent. Secondly we may say that all objects reside latent in the subject and when they come out of it they appear to be distinct and are termed objects by us. These states are not simultaneous as we saw in the last chapter. The mind appears as object and subject alternately and so we may say that Reality assumes the form of subject or object according to the state of mind. At any particular instant it is the one or the other but not both. Thirdly whatever comes out of the subject must be also only subject, it cannot be different from it as there is nothing to cause the change.

All these different ways of looking at the changeless and eternal Existence in a pure form are mere palliatives for the doubting mind. It undergoes countless transformations amounting to an evolutionary cycle in terms of time and space because of its doubt about its own nature, whether it is eternal or as fleeting as the dream phenomena. When once it obtains the conviction that it is verily one with the eternal Intelligence or Consciousness and experiences it, then all doubts vanish and the Mind is then transformed into Consciousness. In this state, it is in a state of pure Existence ; there is no experience or act of knowing. It is verily the state of knowledge. Thus Reality is pure all embracing Existence.

It is not generally recognised that Reality is not something unattainable but is immediate and actually experienced by everybody although not recognised. We are part and parcel of this and all that we do takes place in it. When the mind subsides it becomes one with Reality ; between one thought and another Reality is experienced. So to establish Reality no logic nor elaborate reasoning is needed. It is everyone's experience each day of his life and many times each day: All that we need to do is to turn our attention to it and become aware of it.

We must however distinguish between the use of the expression "Reality" in ordinary life and in Philosophic discussions. In ordinary usage the expression indicates what is perceptible to the senses, since life is largely governed by sense impressions. This reality is an ephemeral one and changes from person to person. But in philosophy we are concerned with exploring the abiding "Truth" or Existence which alone is entitled to be called "Reality" there. Thus the same expression is used differently in the two contexts the significances of which two are quite opposed to each other.

This subject-object relationship (or the Supreme and the individual soul) is often the subject of unending debate. These differences in conception are due to the different stand points from which each adherent argues. So long as embodied life lasts, duality cannot be shed as it is the very basis of such existence. Only in moments of perfect quiescence of mind is duality shed for the time being but immediately

thereafter we have to return to the dual existence of being objects or ideas and Consciousness alternately; permanent dissolution in the Supreme being can arise only when the Jiva is finally released from embodied existence. There does not seem to be any room for much argument unless one sticks to the present and the other to the future state only.

The whole creation except the human species is permanently rooted in duality and man alone is endowed with the faculty to understand the unity of existence and to strive to attain it. But such Release can be spoken of only with reference to each individual and not with reference to the whole species or even small groups.

CHAPTER XVII

THE CONCEPT OF NOTHING.

In the last chapter we said that pure Existence, without any modifications, ever present, changeless is the only Reality. It is beyond both speech and mind. That state can be referred to in one of two ways, namely either by itself without reference to anything else or in terms of finite existence. In the former case we call it pure Existence or Absolute, Reality or Infinite. In the latter case it can well be called "Nothing" or Sunyam. There really is not a thing or idea or anything in that condition and what is more proper than to call it Sunyam?

But in general, people would more readily accept the term Absolute than Sunyam. As soon as the latter term is used to indicate pure existence, the question is raised how then something can come out of "Nothing". They forget for the moment that there really is no "Something". What we designate as the "Things" of the world derive all their attributes from the "Mind" that cognises them and invests them with these attributes. It is only in relation to the Mind they can be called "things" but not in relation to the Absolute. Mind is however a series of states and is outside the range of the senses. We established already in Chapter XII that the things of the world are mere states of the mind and cannot be established at all as independent entities in their own nature. They exist or not according as the mind is turned on to them or not. Thus as between

these two, the mind if at all, can more rightly lay claim to existence than "the things" which do not exist except at the mind's dictates. Again mind is not an enduring thing; it is but a succession of states, in the intervals of which it is dissolved into Nothing. Thus every state of the mind springs from "Nothing" and lapses back into it. "Nothing" is therefore the only enduring Reality. All that is perceptible to the senses or comprehended by the Mind are illusions and do not exist. They are as real or as illusory as our dreams. What we see and enjoy are only dreams of longer duration and as impermanent as those of shorter ones. If all that is perceptible can be said to exist, then the mirage, the silver in the mother-of-pearl, the snake in the rope and our own dreams have equal claims to be said to exist. In truth, all that is within the range of comprehension of the Mind are illusions of the Mind and do not really exist; they take on various appearances and then disappear. And what really exists is beyond the Mind. So then in relation to all the things we know, pure Existence is "Nothing". Things are comprehensible by the Mind and what is not comprehensible is Nothing. Infinity is not comprehensible by the Mind nor is Absolute and these just equate to "Nothing".

All the things of the world exist in opposing pairs as we pointed out in the first chapter. Good and evil, hot and cold, happiness and misery, positive and negative, rich and poor, hill and dale and so forth. They all neutralise to zero at any and every instant, i.e., the sum

total effect is always nil. That means, that nothing ever really happens. There is no change, in truth, although everything everywhere appears to change. The changes are of the changing Mind phenomena. Change and changelessness are two opposing features characteristic of the Mind. In its one aspect, namely change, it witnesses the world phenomena and its own evolution and in its other aspect it subsides itself and there is neither a seer nor a thing to be seen. What exists then is "Nothing".

Again it is a matter of everyday experience that all things and all experiences start from a condition of being nothing at start. From childhood to old age we go on learning many things without knowing anything previously every time. From a state of no knowledge we reach a state of knowledge in every aspect of life. Nobody would deny that everything in this universe is subject to apparent unceasing change and that this is unending. Now what is this change ; whatever is ceases to be and what was not comes into our comprehension. That means something comes out of nothing and goes back to nothing. But how can such a statement be reconciled with our Reason. Surely it does not stand to reason. The natural inference is that the "Something" during the intervening period is also really nothing. Nothing at start, nothing in the end, how can we presume something in between? Verily all are Nothing. Nothing is the only Reality. Every "Thing" of the world is something only in relation to Nothing. Without Nothing there cannot be a concept of something.

This concept that "Nothing" is the only Reality differs from the Buddhist's concept fundamentally. The Buddhist's concept denies Existence altogether even in the ultimate stage whereas this concept of "Vasishta" is opposed to it. "Nothing" is ahiding Existence and everything is rooted in it. While the one discounts ultimate existence and takes us all to utter dissolution the other leads us to an ahiding existence after all activity subsides, as only then creation has a meaning or can start. But there need be no wrangling over this point as it is after all a state that is attained after the body is finally shed. We are primarily concerned with embodied existence and do not care for what happens when we are finally released from the present shackles

Whether in Mathematics or Science the number zero affords the basis for everything of reference. Without the concept of zero the Science of mathematics could not have been developed to its present state. It is the grandest concept of the human mind. The very symbol which denotes it is significant of the inherent nature of the human mind as well as all natural phenomena *i e.*, to operate in recurrent cycles. That is why the universe looks round reflecting thereby the very nature of the Mind. Without the concept of Nothing, nothing can ever have an apparent existence. Nothing signifies real existence as it remains changeless at all times, whereas all others are subject to change and have only an apparent existence. So Nothing is the only real basis of all Existence.

This state is variously called God, Purusha, Iswara, Vishnu, Absolute, Sunyam, Reality, Pure Intelligence, Pure Consciousness and so forth in the different religious or philosophical literatures of the world. It is however not to be understood as a dull and inert state. It is on the other hand a state of nascent activity, intense awareness. It is at the same time everything and nothing; while all else are only the one or the other at a time.

CHAPTER XVIII

CREATION CONSIDERED AGAIN

Having attained the state of the substratum of life phenomena *i.e.*, pure unqualified Existence, we can now look back over the panorama of creation and the created beings that are its products. The truth of the statements, made in Chapter III under the paragraph entitled "Before the Universe came into existence", can now be realised. The Absolute or Reality is beyond speech and mind, as the ancient Rishis have forcibly expressed it. Reality then reveals itself only in glimpses ordinarily and when one has shed the "Self" idea completely he becomes It. So then everything else *i.e.*, the mind and the world of objects are all verily unreal; they are only ephemeral phenomena continuously changing as in a Kaleidoscope but wearing the appearance of Reality as long as the mind is engrossed in them, in utter disregard of its other aspect namely perfect repose. But when mind subsides, as it often does during our waking periods in the intervals between thoughts it becomes one with the Absolute. Thus mind and the world phenomena cognised by it belong to the same category and are mere ideas or percepts repeatedly flashing before Consciousness and do not have an abiding existence nor form and substance.

This state, beyond all the things of the world, beyond speech and mind and belonging to a category of its own, cannot have given rise to this world as we see and

believe. What we perceive is as illusory as the snake in the rope. The semblance of Reality arises out of the trick played by the brain which retains the impressions of the vague and transitory ideas passing in the mind and brings them repeatedly before Consciousness making them appear as real, in the same manner as the husband begins to believe what is repeatedly lectured to him in season and out of season by his beloved wife.

How then does any activity, however pure, arise in the absolute state of repose and what is the purpose? There is the real mystery which defies explanation. Most religions explain it away by saying that it is the act of God. Sankara explained it by saying that it is due to Maya, not that there is such a thing as Maya but that we suffer from it and see what does not exist. Vasishta says that one can explain it in different ways namely (1) that everything is Absolute and that there is no second thing; (2) that all are verily Nought; (3) that the one and the same thing appears as world forms in the active state and as Absolute in the state of repose.

All these explanations however are mere devices, or subterfuges one may call them, to satisfy the mind. But, as we have already pointed out, mind itself is a myth and non-existing. How then can we hope to explain Reality to un-Reality, except by resorting to such devices and quelling the doubting mind.

Another point to note is that Reality cannot become evident unless we pass through the travail of un-Reality. It is this travail of un-Reality from the atom to the human being that has taken millions of years to evolve itself step by step. For, it is an almost impossible feat to bring out all this phenomenal world out of Nothing. It is like trying to extract oil out of sand. Again unless one passes through a long-continued process of auto-suggestion he cannot see what does not truly exist. The creative act and the process of evolution has happened only in this manner and hence such a long period of time was required for the successive deceptions to be completed. In spite of it, the whole creation disappears when the mind is withdrawn from gazing outwards and this can be repeated as often as we like

Thus, as we stated in chapter III., what truly exists eternally, filling up all this infinite space, permeating every atom and every substance and creature, is the homogeneous mass of Consciousness only.

CHAPTER XIX

RIGHT LIVING

One would expect that this small work would have concluded with the last two chapters, as the highest attainable state had been attained and as there is nothing further to be said about Existence. But it is not so, since we have still to consider the nature of the existence after attaining the Jivan-Mukhta stage. Although the mind is in dissolution in this state, the physical body persists on account of its inherent inertia. There is always a time lag, of varying durations according to the state of purity of the mind, between the birth of an idea in the mind and the fulfilment of it in the shape of a concrete physical act. They never are in synchronism. So does decay not overtake the body in synchronism with dissolution of the Mind. The body is a product of Nature, i.e., it is a Cosmic dream, while to the human mind it appears to be reality. Therefore the inert body continues its state of existence by the surviving momentum even though the subtle Mind has reached abiding repose. There arises therefore the necessity to regulate the conduct of life during the remaining span, until decay of the body sets in, obeying natural laws. This ill-assorted combination, of a mind bereft of the last vestige of reacting tendency and a physical body which may be in full vigour and vitality, if the person happens to become a Jivan-Mukhta early in life, has to march together till final Release is obtained with the dissolution of the present physical body. Thus the consideration of the

art of right living becomes necessary even after the highest state has been attained. After all, the aim of all knowledge is to fashion one's life properly. Life is to be lived and not made a mess of.

The life of the common men embraces three aspects, *viz.*, (1) the upkeep of the body; (2) the effort to find the means of sustenance; and (3) lastly the employment of leisure hours. One may well ask what has the Jivan-Mukhta to do with the cares of the ordinary man. This question arises from the mistaken notion that the Jivan-Mukhta is one who has retired from worldly life altogether and lives away from the strife and turmoil of the world in the forest, living on whatever may be available there, with bearded face and matted locks and so forth. Unfortunately this idea has taken deep root in the minds of most people. But he it known that this is not a complete picture. The Jivan-Mukhta may be in any walk or station in life. Birth, caste, race or country is no bar to become a Jivan-Mukhta. He may eat what he likes or pursue whatever profession he is fit to pursue; these do not disqualify him from being a perfected being. What has food or profession to do with mental equilibrium which is attained after enquiry and acquisition of true knowledge. Foods or calling in life, in themselves, do not induce any particular feeling in anyone. It is one's own attitude to them that gradually develop various reactions in him. But one who does not take up any particular attitude to them and is quite neutral, remains without any kind of reactions. His mind continues to be unqualified, that is to say, his equilibrium is

undisturbed. Thus one with mental equipoise does not bother about his food ; he just takes what is available.

But no doubt the ordinary man does not remain unaffected by the nature of the food or by the means adopted by him to earn his living, because he is essentially a creature of habits and preconceived ideas and under their influences his mind reacts to their influences. Hence as a course of training for the ordinary man in the early stages, various injunctions are prescribed to enable the aspirant for a higher life to be free from the distractions arising from mental reactions. They are therefore only to be understood as a temporary means to be adopted for an eventual fuller life and not as an end in themselves. After one has passed through the various practices and attained the frame of mind, which does not react to any condition or circumstance of life that may arise, it is but fit that he should live out his life in the midst of the general life-stream.

him in this manner. Thus his rightful place is in the general stream of life.

The idea behind the performance of the Asvamedha Yoga is to let the mind wander freely amidst objects of senses, as a fleet footed horse may wander over many lands and obtain mastery over them. Such mastery is obtained only when the mind is free from any reaction on coming in contact with all such objects. This is the true Asvamedha Yoga. The Mahabharata is a grand allegory exemplifying the fight between Mind in the shape of Draupadi with her five senses in the shape of the five Pandava heroes, fighting the hordes of enemies, *viz.*, the Kurus representing the objects of the senses. Sri Krishna is the Witness enabling all principal events to be decided in his presence. He plays the part of a charioteer with the leading strings in his hand.

The significance of the advice given by Sri Krishna to Arjuna before the commencement of the actual fight between the Pandavas and Kurus, known as the "Song Celestial" or "Bhagavad-Gita" and the nature of the advice given is only then appropriate. Of course in this new context, Arjuna is to be considered as representing the Mind. The end of the fight is the total extinction of the objects *i.e.*, reaction to objects, which is equivalent to the objects being as good as non-existent.

When thus the adept looks on everything with an equal eye, when good and bad are synonymous terms for him, when pleasure is not looked upon differently from pain, what matters it for him whether he lives in the busiest part of the world, participating in all its activities, or leads a lonely life away in the forest. Wherever he is, he carries the abiding peace of his mind with him. From his own point of view, it is immaterial where he lives and how he lives. But the rest of the world would be greatly benefited when he leads his life amidst them as he would stand as a shining example of how life is to be truly lived. His return to the forest would be a great loss to mankind.

S. V. GANAPATI

ERRATA

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